THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor: R. PALME DUTT

Volume 6 August, 1924 Number 8

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

Towards a New Policy.—VIII
A Reply by W. H. HUTCHINSON
(Labour Party Executive)
A Postscript by R. PALME DUTT

Left Wing Labour:
Should it Cherish Illusions? By J. R. CAMPBELL

The Sudan "Scandal"
By H. R. RATHBONE

Art, Religion and Marxism
By A. BOGDANOV

"Stabilisation"
By GEZA SCHUTZ

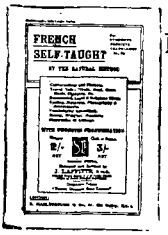
KARL MARX on ROBERT APPLEGARTH

Published at
162 BUCKINGHAM PALACE ROAD, LONDON, S.W. 1

PRICE SIXPENCE

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SPEAK TO THE PEOPLE IN THEIR OWN LANGUAGE



by using

MARLBOROUGH'S "SELF-TAUGHT" SERIES

For learning the language by the Natural Method, with Phonetic Pronunciation arranged for learning AT A GLANCE. Containing Notes on Articles, Gender, Accents, &c.; Classified Vocabularies; Conversational Phrases and Sentences; Travel Talk; Naval, Military, and Commercial Terms; Tables of Money, &c., with Illustration of French Coinage.

NORWEGIAN Self-Taught
DANISH Self-Taught

3/- Net each Cloth 4/-

SWEDISH Self-Taught
DUTCH Self-Taught

For a Complete List (No. 16), write to the Publishers

LONDON: E. MARLBOROUGH & CO., Ltd., 51 OLD BAILEY, E.C. 4.

SPEND YOUR HOLIDAYS BY THE SEA AT

CAISTER CAMP

Near NORFOLK BROADS and GREAT YARMOUTH

Good Catering, Comfortable Huts and Tents. Delightful situation. Grounds 25 acres.

FREE TENNIS, BOWLS, AND BATHING.
DANCES, CONCERTS, BILLIARDS. CAMPING IN COMFORT.

Send Stamp for Illustrated Booklet to Proprietor, J. FLETCHER DODD, Caister-on-Sea.

THE LABOR HERALD

Official Organ of the Trade Union Educational League

WILLIAM Z. FOSTER, Editor

The Magazine that has stirred the American Labor Movement to its foundation. From month to month it analyses the developments in the Trade Unions, and gives militant leadership to the awakening rank and file. Of its work and that of the T.U.E.L., the R.I.L.U. said: "The Third Session of the Central Council of the Red International of Labor Unions acknowledges with satisfaction the success attained in the United States and Canada by the Trade Union Educational League. The Council greets with warm commendation the creation of a widespread sentiment among the organised workers in favor of amalgamation, and of the realisation of all the slogans of the T.U.E.L."

The only authoritative left-wing Trade Union publication in America.

THE LABOUR MONTHLY -	One Year -	$2.00
THE LABOR HERALD - -	One Year -	1.50
	Total for both magazines	$3.50
SPECIAL COMBINATION OFFER, TO UNITED STATES SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, FOR BOTH MAGAZINES -		$2.75

Send subscriptions to THE LABOUR MONTHLY'S American Office (192 Broadway, New York City), or to Trade Union Educational League, 106 No. La Salle Street, Chicago, U.S.A.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A Magazine of International Labour

VOLUME 6 AUGUST, 1924 NUMBER 8

Editor: R. PALME DUTT

CONTENTS

Towards a New Policy—A Reply - - Page 425
By W. H. HUTCHINSON

A Postscript - - - - - - - „ 457
By R. PALME DUTT

Left Wing Labour: Should It Cherish Illusions? - - - - - - „ 472
By J. R. CAMPBELL

The Sudan "Scandal" - - - - - „ 481
By H. P. RATHBONE

Religion, Art and Marxism - - - - „ 489
By A. BOGDANOV

Stabilisation - - - - - - - „ 498
By GEZA SCHUTZ

Karl Marx on Robert Applegarth - - „ 503

The World of Labour - - - - - „ 505
Germany—France

Published at
162 Buckingham Palace Road
London
S.W.1

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Labour Monthly

Editorial and Publishing Offices:

162 BUCKINGHAM PALACE RD., S.W.1

Telephone: VICTORIA 9193.

¶ The Editor of *The Labour Monthly* invites contributions. He cannot, however, be held responsible for MSS. sent to him, or undertake to enter into correspondence regarding rejected contributions, although every endeavour will be made to return the same when a stamped and addressed envelope for that purpose is enclosed.

1924: Reduced Subscription Rates

[PAID IN ADVANCE]

One year - 7/- Six months - 3/6

United States of America Subscription Representative:—Philip Novick, 192 Broadway, Room 15, New York City, N.Y., U.S.A.

Advertising Rates:

Ordinary (unspecified) position, £5 5s. per page, and *pro rata.*

Special position (facing matter), £7 7s. Cover, £8 8s. Small advertisements on last page of text, £1 1s. per inch. Discount for series.

Volume V (July to December, 1923) can be supplied for 7s. 6d. post free, or these numbers can be bound and returned post free for 4s. 6d.

Cases can be supplied for 3s. 6d. post free.

Title Page for Volume V can be had on application if 1½d. for postage is sent.

VOLUME VI

At the request of numerous subscribers, THE LABOUR MONTHLY will in future be bound in annual volumes instead of six-monthly as heretofore. The present volume will accordingly cover all issues during 1924, and no index will appear until the publication of the December issue.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Owing to the Editor's absence on account of illness his usual "Notes of the Month" are not published in this number of "The Labour Monthly." But there appears instead (on page 457) his "Postscript" to the series of articles, "Towards a New Policy," that concludes with Mr. W. H. Hutchinson's reply in the present issue.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TOWARDS A NEW POLICY.—A REPLY

By W. H. HUTCHINSON

(Amalgamated Engineering Union and Labour Party National Executive)

> What are the prospects if something is not done radically to change the position? There are two alternatives, the symptoms of both of which have already revealed themselves.
>
> One alternative is the blind and anarchic revolt of sections of the rank and file, already shown in the growing tendency of unofficial strikes, repudiation of authority of leaders, and even break-aways from the accredited organisation. These tendencies are too often treated as simply occasion for individual blame or moral exhortation to leaders of men: but they are really the symptoms of a disease which lies deeper and for which we have to find the remedy.

THE above paragraph, written eight months ago for the first article of this series, has since received startling confirmation. The predicted effect of the lack of a new policy for the Trade Union Movement has already been shown. Under these circumstances there is no need to stress the necessity of an attempt at organised thinking, represented by such a series as this. Events themselves have provided the fullest justification.

Last December, when I wrote the first of the articles that have been appearing under the above title, I undertook to do so largely as an experiment: and I must express my appreciation of the fact that numerous representatives of the Trade Union and Labour Movement have been good enough to contribute to the series and join with me in this experiment. It is to be considered an experiment, because this habit of organised and collective discussion by representatives of the Unions has not been a feature of our movement in the past. This is the first time that anything of this sort has been attempted—and it is to be hoped it will not be the last. For these expressions of opinion, even though reserved, must surely have some beneficent effect towards finding a policy.

What I had in mind in opening this series was set forth in my article in January. I was concerned to find the causes of the fundamental weakness in the existing movement, to consider the darker

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

prospects that must open out if nothing is done to remedy those weaknesses and finally to suggest one or two immediate steps. The fundamental weakness appeared to be the lack of a clear common aim and objective, the attempt to continue the old haphazard policies that may have fitted the times when they were conceived, but were now hopelessly inadequate to meet the new world of to-day. The first suggested immediate step was to find a common programme that would unite all the most active elements in the Trade Union Movement on immediate common aims. The second step was the development of the Trades Councils as local unifying bodies of the working class, with a right of delegation to the Trades Union Congress. The third step was such a policy of clarifying issues and clearing away difficulties between national trade unions as would lead finally, when the time is ripe, to an extension of the powers of the General Council. In the succeeding articles contributed, three by members of the General Council, and three by members of the Labour Party Executive, there was little direct criticism of these very tentative suggestions : nor, except in one case, was any detailed alternative offered. On the other hand much was said in examination of the causes of the present weaknesses and confusion—which, it is significant, no one dreamed of denying as an objective statement of fact. With these expressions of opinion and with many other suggestions and observations made I am not concerned to argue in this article. What I wish to do very briefly is to answer one or two of the criticisms that bore directly upon my final proposals for immediate steps to be taken towards a new policy.

Let me take first Mr. Bromley's criticism. He denies that the movement can be organised by giving the Trades Councils more representation : and he proceeds to outline a structure of reorganisation of the existing unions that will give the rank and file more power in the framing of policy. But such a scheme as he outlines has been the constitution of the Amalgamated Engineering Union since 1920; and while it has given some satisfaction, it is not enough to provide that new impulse that is so necessary.

That new impulse can only come from the body of the workers themselves: and we must find the form and shape of organisation that will come nearest to them. If it is good policy for the rank and

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

file of each union to have the power, then surely it is at least equally good that the rank and file of *all* the unions in an area should be provided with machinery for expressing their combined opinion; and how is that to be achieved if the Trades Councils who represent the organised workers in an area are to be denied the right of representation nationally ?

Quite recently, in fact since these articles have been appearing, the General Council has held a meeting of Trades Council representatives for the purpose of obtaining their co-operation. So that the *need* of their expression of local opinion is felt, though the best means of organising that expression have yet to be found and though there is considerable hesitancy in granting representation on the Trades Union Congress.

I feel, however, that when Mr. Bromley despairs of the Trades Councils, he is thinking of them rather as they are now, after thirty years of being left out in the cold since John Burns thrust them out of Congress, then as what they might become. It should be made clear that one looks to the Trades Councils, for the future must see them as developed and strengthened bodies. To this development I alluded in my first article when I said: " The Trades Councils can never play a great part until the district committees or other industrial authorities of the Unions are ready to line up with them."

But the participation of the district committees is not by any means the only change that is necessary. It seems to me certain that sooner or later Trade Unionists have got to realise that the present era of big plants and massed production demands an entire change in the old nineteenth-century fundamental unit of most of our trade unions, the residential branch. That the branch should coincide with the workshop so far as it is feasible is the end to aim at. Given a move in this direction, it is easy to see what a change it would make in the Trades Councils. Instead of being dominated by the Union, as Mr. Bromley suggests, they would be dominated by the workers themselves—or rather, since " dominated " is the wrong word to use in this connection, the Trades Councils would as nearly as possible *be* the workers themselves. And from the Trades Councils thus regenerated there would arise the thing at which we are all aiming in writing these articles—that new impulse

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

towards the solidarity and common action of the working class as a whole.

But if we are amending and improving, nay, creating fresh forms of organisation in the localities, the central bodies must not be neglected. On this question of strengthening the central bodies a number of interesting points were raised: to one of which I must reply.

Mr. Robert Williams seems rather surprised that Mr. Swales should sponsor a resolution to give more power to the General Council and should be opposed by one of his own colleagues on the executive of the A.E.U. But this fact, so far from militating against the resolution Mr. Swales sponsored, is to be reckoned in its favour,and for this reason: Mr.Swales was representing the whole movement, and not simply acting in the capacity of a delegate. Surely it means that the experience of the needs of the whole movement gained by members of the General Council enables them to see points that are inevitably missed by those engaged in the day-to-day work of the Unions and compels them in the interests of the movement to put forward views for which at the time their own organisations may not be ripe.

On the other hand, the Union standpoint is not hard to follow. Their position is clear. They say that until there is some more tangible evidence of a real desire to organise the workers they will not look at the proposition of giving up their executive powers. In such a situation we must not accept the position of deadlock. It becomes clear that much preparatory work is necessary before the end can be reached. We must first ripen the movement towards some such idea of a General Staff by following every concrete proposal that will bring the movement closer together, and so prepare the way for some general controlling body.

Granted that it is not easy to suggest the plan or policy that at one and the same time is able to secure the confidence of the rank and file and also be satisfactory in its working, that is no reason why every idea should not be analysed with a view to its practicability.

If the one big Union is not practicable at the moment, and the Unions are not prepared to give the power to the General Council, then some other method must be put forward which would command general support. And it would appear from indications already

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

given that the time is ripe to consider whether an arrangement that would secure the co-operation of Miners, Metal Workers. Builders, Transport and Textile Unions could not be obtained, It would go a long way towards securing a common programme that would unite the workers in all industries.

These suggestions would require a more detailed working out before they could be fully argued. But our propaganda for the future should be along these lines. For at all cost we must prevent the absolute defeat of the workers in the single industries which has been such a marked feature of the industrial struggles during the last five years.

But even more important than the propaganda of new and improved organisation is the propaganda for the creation of a will to struggle amongst the workers. Without that common will of the working class, that resolve to stand by one another to the end, that determination to resist the attacks of the other side, without these " new and improved organisation " will simply present us with a new and improved husk, from which the kernel has been taken away.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A POSTSCRIPT

By R. PALME DUTT

THE series of articles " Towards a New Policy " initiated by W. H. Hutchinson in the January issue of THE LABOUR MONTHLY, and concluded by his reply in the current issue, has constituted a serious and important experiment in working-class discussion. It has represented an attempt to secure from representative and responsible leaders a declaration of their views, not on particular problems or their own particular union, but on the position as a whole of trade unionism, of the working-class movement, and what in their view needs to be done—in fact, " where in general they are going and whether they are getting there."

Articles have been contributed by three members of the Labour Party Executive, by three members of the General Council, including the Chairman of the General Council, and by four national secretaries of important unions. The articles may thus be regarded as fairly representative of the best elements of the existing leadership, who not only hold directing and responsible positions, but who are concerned for the future of the movement, recognise the necessity of coming change and the value of the fullest general discussion now, and are prepared to take part in such a discussion in a journal circulating principally among the militant elements of the movement.

The thanks of THE LABOUR MONTHLY are due to all those who have taken part in the discussion and have given freely of their time to contribute articles.

* * * *

It is impossible to read this series of articles and to consider all that they imply without a sense of tragedy. It is doubtful whether in any existing document is set out with such relentless precision in black and white for future generations to read the actual range and outlook and conceptions of the existing leadership in relation to the gigantic historical situation and historical tasks of the working class to-day.

Consider for a moment the position.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The British working class is placed at the centre of the greatest modern power of world capitalism, extending over a quarter of the earth. Hundreds of millions of workers are ranged under this power, and are in various stages of struggle to free themselves from this subjection and the miseries attending it. All over the world the workers are struggling to freedom. The future of their struggle, the future of the struggle of the whole working class, turns on the rôle of the British workers.

Capitalism has reached its culminating stage of imperialist rivalry and division, parcelling out the whole earth between a few world-powers, subjecting the lives of the entire human race to the manipulations of a handful of financial oligarchs, driving the workers into world war on an undreamt-of scale, and producing the slaughter of millions, famines, blockades and economic crises more sweeping and terrible in their effect than a famine or a plague.

The workers' struggle has reached its most desperate and critical phase. In one part of the earth they have won through, and are maintaining their power with their lives. In other parts the rising workers are held down by open violence and force of arms. The smooth phrases of class co-operation and legality and democracy have given place to White Terror and open illegality and Fascism. At the head of this gaolers' and butchers' work stand the British and American bourgeoisie. Over the whole hangs the threat of new war preparing on every side on a scale more terrible than any preceding.

Production has begun to go down. Unemployment extends by millions. Over whole sections of the earth have developed conditions of economic paralysis, or artificial stabilisation, resulting in slave conditions, which in their turn react on the remaining sections. Even in the favoured centres of imperialism the workers are increasingly experiencing shortage and want. Capitalism can no longer offer prosperity even to a section. The living conditions of the British workers are steadily worsening. The workers are desperately striving to find a means to improve their conditions. Millions are turning to vote for the Labour Party. Whole sections plunge into strikes, often against their leaders and the official movement.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The old movement has proved its complete helplessness to meet the workers' needs. Already before the war the workers were moving in discontent. During the war the majority of the leaders, instead of fighting for the workers' interests, went over in a body to the service of the war machine of the master class ; and the whole trade union machine was prostituted to the service of harnessing the workers for war production. From that moment the unofficial movement of the workers became strong. After the war the workers, stirred with a new revolutionary impulse, flocked to organise in the unions in millions and pressed for new audacious demands of social change.

But the old trade union machine failed the workers with a failure so absolute and signal that it has become stamped for ever after in the memory of every proletarian in England. Open treachery, shameless disunity and unconcealed service to the master class broke the ranks of the British proletariat in the very hour of battle, and handed them over, without even the opportunity to strike a blow in common on their own behalf, to the mercy of the capitalist victors. The capitalist offensive swept unchallenged throughout the working class, striking down all without distinction. The workers, in bitter anger and disgust and apathy, passed out of the unions in millions. When this reached such a point that even the financial basis was endangered, the discredited leaders (who had been toying with the idea of an industrial truce) came forward, without a single admission for the past or proposal for the future, to urge a " Back to the Union " appeal, which, made under such circumstances, was received with the silent contempt and indifference it deserved.

Driven onward by their own desperate needs, the workers have pressed forward to struggle again, without leadership, without common plan, forcing issues on hesitating leaders, often without even the machinery of their union, and yet even so under these conditions plucking some advance from the capitalists by sheer readiness to attack and solidarity. In every struggle during the past two years the issue has been the barest needs—wages, hours and trade union rights. In every struggle the machine of the organised movement, even where the workers have forced their own sectional union into action, has been directed against the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

workers. Union officials have joined hand in hand with the employers in ordering strikers back to work who have been fighting against a starvation wage or against being used to blackleg on other parts of the country. The trade union machine has been used to split the ranks of the workers, even where the workers were forging their own unity on the basis of their place of work, and has even been put into operation to compel men to blackleg under union instructions. The General Council, which was created to remedy the shameful disunity of the movement, has functioned in every dispute as a Mediation Committee on behalf of the employers, preventing the solidarity of the movement. The Labour Government, which was set up by the support of the workers, has acted as the policeman of the capitalist interests, declaring its readiness to protect blacklegs in the interests of the community, and even putting into operation against men on strike the dictatorial powers of capitalist strike-breaking legislation.

The existing leadership has wholly failed to lead. Not one atom of attempt has there been to guide or encourage the struggle of the workers, to develop and organise their resistance, to unite their ranks or to plan the movements of the working-class army. Instead there has been not only practical impotence to lead, but also actual trafficking with the enemy during a fight, denunciations of men on strike through the joyful columns of the capitalist Press, ordering men back to work at a wage that the official in question would think an insult for himself, and continual breaking the ranks through sectional divisions. All this the existing leadership has done in the name of solidarity, authority, discipline and the cause of the working-class movement. And at the same time that they have appealed to these principles for such purposes, they have themselves presented in their public dealings such a spectacle of petty backbiting, corporate sectionalism, small intrigue and cynical indifference to the wider interests of their own movement as could bear comparison with the records of the most corrupt institutions in world history.

* * * *

This is the desperate situation of the British working-class movement on the eve of the most gigantic struggles in the experience of the British working class.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In this situation comes the supreme opportunity and the supreme need for those individual leaders who are alive to the necessities of the position and of the dangers with which the whole movement is faced, to stand forward, to diagnose the situation, to interpret the demands of the workers, to point the way ahead—in a word, to provide that leadership for want of which the movement is perishing.

News comes that a group of leaders is prepared to take the responsibility, is working out a "forward" policy, and is ready to make proposals.

A heavy responsibility lies upon these leaders. We must in charity assume that they have given of their best. And this is what the revolutionary worker who comes to look to them for guidance will receive :—

> My contribution is an evasion of the details of a new forward policy and a restatement of the old. (A. A. PURCELL.)
>
> I am impressed more than ever that what we want more than any "New Policies" is the patient thorough-going application of the old policies from which we have derived tangible benefits. (ROBERT WILLIAMS.)
>
> Our industrial programme must be one envisaged within the practical framework of the capitalist system. (GEORGE HICKS.)
>
> We can make far-reaching progress by adhering to that policy and those measures upon which our movement has been built. (ROBERT WILLIAMS.)
>
> No good purpose will be served by dealing at any length with the failings of the past. (WILL LAWTHER.)
>
> Give up searching for new methods merely because they are new, and—above all—let us cease our eternal recrimination.—(ROBERT WILLIAMS.)
>
> The chief thing should be to go in and get something; if it comes off well, good—if not well, come again—and again—and again. (A. A. PURCELL.)
>
> My preference is for preaching, urging, quietly, noisily, in season and out, undiluted working-class solidarity. (A. A. PURCELL.)

And this is the best, most "progressive," most enlightened leadership of the British working-class forces at a time of open failure, disruption and heavy defeats !

If a capitalist business firm were to undergo losses of twelve hundred million pounds in two years (the amount of wage reduction lost by the workers), and to lose a million and a-half customers (the number of trade unionists lapsed), and if it were a notorious

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fact that many of the principal managers of the firm were in open association with enemy firms, and that none of the departments of the firm had any knowledge of what the other departments were doing, and were principally occupied in fighting the other departments, and that there was no general management or control of the firm's enterprise as a whole whatsoever, and that the greater part of the losses were demonstrably attributable to these causes, and if under these conditions the directors of the firm were to come before their shareholders to explain their position, and were to proceed to enunciate as their understanding of the position such oracular remarks as "Nothing like sound old business principles," "Stick to it—that's what wins," "No recriminations, gentlemen: above all, do not let us discuss the past," "Solvency —that's my motto: in season and out of season I preach undiluted solvency"—then those directors would certainly not remain long in the City. (It remains to add for the completion of the simile that these directors represent the more "progressive" directors, and that the majority of their more "stick-in-the-mud" colleagues would never dream of attending a shareholders' meeting to explain their position at all.)

But this simile, so far from being too strong, is actually too weak for the present position of trade unionism in Britain. For it is not here a mere question of a business enterprise and ordinary straightforward efficiency and organisation (though these simple necessities are none the less necessary), but a political task, a supreme political task, of the leadership of the British working class through the greatest struggle in history, a task demanding the most exact knowledge, the most careful study of every item of recent campaigns and failures and their reason as well as of the actual forces and possibilities of the existing situation, the most sensitive response to the demands of the workers and every opportunity of advance, the most unhesitating precise formulation of the tasks to be accomplished and the means of victory, and the most responsible collective thinking and complete elimination of all sectional and individual points of view.

* * * *

The first of the articles, the opening article by W. H.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hutchinson, did at least show some recognition of the existing situation. Mr. Hutchinson stated:—

> There is no question that the present position of the organised movement is very serious. The movement is weaker than it has been for a considerable time past; the conditions of the workers are very bad; there is very great confusion of policy and action; and there is a marked discontent inside the membership with what is felt to be a failure of the existing leadership.

Mr. Hutchinson stated nextly that the post-war position made doubtful the possibility of continuing the old line of policy.

> To-day we are thrown into a new world. The economic and political crisis let loose by the war, and intensified after the war, and the changed industrial position of Great Britain, have all affected the whole situation of the working class of this country.
>
> It becomes open to question how much longer we can hope to gain anything on the old lines; how far there can be any improvement of wages and conditions under the economic decay of British capitalism. If we are to go forward at all, we have to be ready—a united force with a positive policy of advance against capitalism.

Finally Mr. Hutchinson stated that the consequence of failure to meet the new situation would mean the danger of break up of the whole movement.

> What are the prospects if something is not done radically to change the position? There are two alternatives, the symptoms of both of which have already revealed themselves.
>
> One alternative is the blind and anarchic revolt of sections of the rank and file, already shown in the growing tendency of unofficial strikes, repudiation of authority of leaders and even break-aways from the accredited organisation. . . .
>
> The other alternative is . . . apathy. . . .
>
> These are the two alternatives in front of us if a serious attempt is not made to face the whole position and mark out the future path. Revolt or apathy—both alike are equally fatal to the future of the movement.

This was at any rate an attempt to diagnose the situation. The conclusions that Mr. Hutchinson drew from his diagnosis were very limited in character—admission of trades councils to the Trades Union Congress; a common programme (without indication of the meaning or method of a common programme) and a demarcation policy. These conclusions might well be damningly criticised as pitifully inadequate to the situation drawn, and to this extent revealing in the end precisely the same bankruptcy

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as the other articles. But there was at any rate here an attempt to face the actual situation and draw conclusions.

Not one of the other articles made any attempt to meet Mr. Hutchinson's points or to face the actual situation. There was neither agreement, nor disagreement, but simple blankness. The nearest approach was Mr. Cook's article, who stated bluntly:—

> The present form of organisation in Great Britain has almost become obsolete. Plymouth was an exhibition of tribal chiefs fighting to retain the confidence of their tribe. There was no suggestion of unity, but a fight to retain small unions and leadership.

Mr. Cook, however, confined himself practically to organisation (although his article was in substance more definite than any of the others) and did not give himself time to explain his views more fully. Mr. Bromley touched on one limited aspect of the position (again on organisation) when he said:—

> British trade unionism is at present dominated by the union officials; the rank and file have very little direct and continuous management of their union, and therefore are not interested.

Mr. Lawther made a passing reference to the miners' negotiations. Perhaps it should be added to make the list complete that Mr. Williams quoted the General Council debate at the Trades Union Congress.

And that was all.

Apart from this, there was not a single reference throughout the articles to the actual situation. This is the most significant fact about the whole articles. There was not only no attempt to take stock of the existing position, of successes and failures, of objective conditions, of internal conditions, of strengths and weaknesses, and to draw conclusions from the results. There was not even any consciousness of the situation as historically governing any discussion and possibilities to be reached. There was no consideration of the forces of the capitalists. There was no consideration of the forces of the proletariat. There was no consideration of the line of direction of the movement during the past few years, or the prospect in the period immediately ahead. *There was not so much as a reference in the whole course of the articles to a single actual strike or struggle.*

Instead there was nothing but an endless succession of vague generalities about " old policies," " new policies," " programmes,"

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

" solidarity," " unity," " ever-improving standards of life," &c., &c., accompanied by a few miscellaneous proposals of minor changes in organisation.

This fact is of tremendous importance. It means that for the present-day trade union official, even the best of them, the working-class struggle as a whole does not exist. For the affairs of their own union they have a keen strong practical historical sense, of its resources, its possibilities, its problems and its immediate objectives. But when it comes to the position of the working-class struggle as a whole, it all becomes for them abstract and remote, a matter of phrases and sporadic disconnected notions and the general genial fuzz so admirably illustrated by the article of the Chairman of the General Council:—

> All these programmes, platforms, policies and manifestos have their place. I have been in at the drafting of millions of them, but never once did I believe they would do the thing the chief enthusiasts desired. My view has always been that I regarded this literature attack as an effort to get the working class to know itself. . . .
>
> I would leave those who are desperately anxious to adumbrate new policies to their task, let them keep to it. They are quite a necessary part of our working-class mosaic. Keep them in it and at it. (A. A. PURCELL.)

From this fact follow very heavy conclusions—for this question is the decisive question for the ability of leadership.

In the first place, this fact determines the character of the articles as a whole.

From it inevitably follows the result that the articles deal only with questions of machinery. For the writers of the articles it is not a movement and a struggle that they are dealing with, but an imaginary fixed static thing that they control, a machine, which has to be " reconstructed." Hence they not only put in the first place, but actually treat as the only issue, questions of committees, representation, ballot votes, demarcation, number of unions, &c. As if a generation of experience of left-wing chasing after amalgamation, industrial unionism and the rest, leading to the actual product of the N.U.R. and Thomas-Cramp, had not taught the utterly deceitful and misleading character of any and all such changes except and unless accompanied by the superior dominating issue of the revolutionary class struggle. This is the fact which enables Mr. Bromley to make effective play with the deification

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the big union, not, however, on behalf of revolutionary working-class organisation and action, but on behalf of craft unionism, thus offering no way forward for the working class as a whole.

Unless the proposals of General Council powers, trade union reorganisation, demarcation, industrial unionism and all the rest are accompanied by and made to give precedence to the current revolutionary issues of the class struggle, expressed through the actual conflict of opposition or minority movements, based on the class struggle, and openly fighting and defeating the existing leadership and establishing a new revolutionary direction of the whole movement, then all these proposals of changes and improvements in organisation become, not only of no use to the working class, but actual additional instruments in the hands of the reactionary leaders.

There is only one genuinely and fundamentally revolutionary issue in the whole question of organisation, and that is the issue of workshop organisation. Needless to say, that issue is wholly untouched in any of the articles. Here is the point at which the question of organisation verges into the question of the class, and therefore becomes revolutionary in its significance. Where all proposals of amalgamation, consolidation, &c., reveal themselves as in fact only questions of amalgamation and consolidation of officials, the organisation of the workers on the basis of the workshop means inevitably the organisation of the workers as a class, the unification of the workers, not in terms of machinery and classification, but in living terms and for action, the release of the common consciousness of the workers as a class to find free yet organised expression, and the preparation for the real advance, the advance for the capture of industry.

The development of a complete fighting structure of workshop organisation alongside the old obsolete shell of existing trade unionism (which cannot be "reconstructed" in a lifetime); the maximum freedom of expression and action of the workshop unit; but at the same time the absolute, unhesitating centralisation of the direction of the movement as a whole—these are the revolutionary issues to fight for in organisation.

But just because these are revolutionary issues, for this very reason they find no place in these articles, which are confined to

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a cramped mechanical patching without any reference to inner change or to the direction of the movement ("success for any industrial organisation is conditional on a more perfected and efficient machine."—WILL LAWTHER).

From this complete separation from the struggle and the movement, and static mechanical outlook, follows inevitably that the whole process and functioning and objective is regarded as solely within capitalism, and that any question of revolutionary struggle is implicitly, and in some cases even explicitly, excluded. This is the second dominant characteristic of these articles, that the whole outlook is subordinate to and confined within the sphere of normal capitalist working.

This does not mean that the revolution is theoretically excluded. It remains for ornament in a corner of the picture, but it has no practical bearing on anything.[1] It survives like the Christian business man's religion—for Sundays. This point is admirably illustrated in Mr. Hicks's very clear statement. Mr. Hicks says:—

> Our industrial programme must be one envisaged within the practical framework of the capitalist system.
>
> No industry, subject to foreign competition, could grant any such demand and continue to live.
>
> It is impossible under capitalism to get away from the Marxian law of wages.
>
> I do not apologise for studying commercial practicability. As a trade union official I am forced to live in a real world.

What, then, becomes of the revolution? It is not forgotten. There is a corner for it away from the cruel racket of this "real world":—

> I assert as my profound conviction that one thing or the other must be done: either boldly to proclaim revolutionary intention or use the power of trade unionism to make the best of the present system whilst our class are being educated in revolutionary principles.

To make the best of the present system whilst our class are being

[1] The one example of a "practical" use of revolutionary propaganda is revealingly expounded by Mr. Williams when he explains why he makes such "revolutionary" speeches:—

> Only recently a wealthy shipowner asked a colleague of mine: "Why is it your friend Williams will make those wild-cat speeches on the platform when he is so able in conducting negotiations at the conference table?" I replied by saying: "Convey my compliments to the gentleman, and say that perhaps a few more wild-cat speeches would bring a little more success at the conference table."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

educated in revolutionary principles. This sentence deserves to stand as the classic epigrammatic statement of the contradiction of reformism. The revolution is finally deified as a subject for Sunday school study. But it must have absolutely no relation with the present struggle and the present movement. The elementary movement of the masses, the struggle for bread, for bare rights, for peace, the growing volume of the movement, the sharpening of the issues, the ranging of the opposing armies, the decay and weakening of the capitalist order, the intensification of social divisions, and so the gradual relentless laying bare to the widest masses of the revolutionary issue and the actual inevitable driving forward into mass conflict—all this has no place in his picture. Instead the revolution becomes a kind of miraculous "conversion" to which the workers are gradually won over, one by one, by a process of peaceful education inside capitalism, until one fine day a majority are won over and the mythical transformation takes place in some unexplained manner. And all the time during this peaceful "education in revolutionary principles" the masses are being tied in actual fact to the chariot of capitalism, soaked in "commercial practicability" and submission to "what the industry can stand," hitched on to the war machine and all its requirements, and in every way made in their practical daily lives the ordered, disciplined, unrebelling slaves of the bourgeois regime with the assistance of these "revolutionaries."

Is not this the supreme picture of the trade union official as the mate of the capitalist ship, loyally serving the interests of his capitalist master and ordering and disciplining the crew to keep within their places and not to impair the master's profits, provided that he may read to them once a week on Sundays a chapter from his Bible of the future society (the majority of the crew meanwhile playing skittles, getting drunk or otherwise solacing themselves for their lot), and meanwhile happily and loyally driving the ship forward, out of regard for "practical" considerations, straight into the rapids of war and economic chaos.

From this follows the third great characteristic of the outlook revealed in these articles, that it is directly and actively anti-revolutionary. The attacks and criticism are above all aimed against the revolutionary section of the movement, either directly as in

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mr. Hicks's article, or indirectly by continual disclaimers of "short cuts to revolution," "impossibilist" demands, &c., &c. For the right-wing leadership, on the other hand, it is agreed that there must be "no recrimination," "no good purpose will be served by dealing at any length with the failings of the past," &c., &c. This analysis does not apply to all the articles in the series: Mr. Cook in his contribution and, with rather less clearness, Mr. Lawther and Mr. Bromley in theirs, range themselves, very broadly speaking, with the revolutionary side of the movement. But it does apply, in the deepest sense, to the essential outlook with which we are here concerned and which it is the main importance of these articles to have expressed—the outlook of "progressive" trade unionism, that is, of the typical "progressive" elements among the existing leadership.

The character of a tendency is often most clearly revealed, not by what it proclaims, but by what, and especially by whom, it attacks. When we find a certain tendency, heralded as progressive, most ready openly to criticise and attack the (very weak) revolutionary side of the movement, but explicitly refraining from attacking the dominant right-wing leadership which is actually responsible for existing conditions, and when we further find this same tendency deliberately refraining from raising any issue of principle of political or revolutionary significance, and confining its innovating zeal to questions of machinery which hurt and excite no one, and even, further, supporting and defending hostility to revolutionary principles and subordination in all practical action to capitalist conceptions and requirements, then we are justified in saying that this tendency cannot in any sense yet be greeted as revealing a new force, but is only another aspect (even though an aspect that may for certain limited purposes have value from a revolutionary point of view) of the existing right-wing leadership.

* * * *

What is the conclusion to be drawn from this for the revolutionary section of the movement?

The first conclusion is very simple. It is that there is as yet no Left Wing Trade Unionism as a force in the leading ranks of the movement, and any imagination that there is will lead to

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bitter disillusionment. The signs and tendencies that exist (as revealed, for example, at Vienna) are important in many ways, and not least as signs of the changes that are going on beneath and are gradually compelling attempts at expression on top. But they represent no conscious movement, no difference in principle, no serious attempt to tackle existing problems and therefore no actual division or conflict. The corporate solidarity of trade union officialism has not yet been broken by the irruption of working-class politics. The most "progressive" officials still continue part of that machine which goes hand in hand with the employers to order men striking against a starvation wage back to work. The only irruption of a new force has been the election of A. J. Cook to the miners' secretaryship, because that has represented the introduction of an element openly based on the forces of the workers below. For this reason that event was of far more significance than any possible expression of individual officials. Only in this way, directly based on the workers below, can a genuine new movement develop in trade unionism. This is the lesson which all those officials who sincerely wish to help forward the future of trade unionism must learn and adapt themselves to in their action and position.

The second conclusion follows from this and is even more important. The struggle for the future of the working class in Britain will have to come from below. There is at present no leadership and no sign of any leadership on top, or in any section on top. A completely new force and a new leadership will have to be created. The revolutionary expression of the working class will have to drive its way into the movement against all the obstacles of the existing machine. This means a task of tremendous difficulty, involving the greatest dangers of dispersion and disruption. The failure, the emptiness, that is revealed in these articles is not only a failure of individuals or a section: it is an historical failure of the whole movement, laying bare gigantic tasks for the future. To meet these dangers and overcome this failure will demand something more serious than has yet existed in the British working-class movement. It will demand something more than a question of trade union reconstruction or of anti-official discontent. It will demand the development of the widest

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

possible mass movement to drive a way forward through the shell of existing trade unionism. And it will demand a powerful working-class party to give that unity and that leadership to the movement which only the common aims of the class struggle can give.

A common mass movement on the simplest basis of the class struggle operating through existing trade unionism in the form of unofficial and minority movements. Workshop organisation to overcome the division of the workers and develop the conscious solidarity of the class and become eventually the practical instrument of action. A working-class party gathering into itself the revolutionary workers and becoming the expression of their leadership. These, in barest principle, are the means by which alone the British workers will break the chains of the machine that binds them and advance to the revolutionary struggle to become the masters of their own destiny.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LEFT WING LABOUR:
Should It Cherish Illusions?

By J. R. CAMPBELL
(Of the Communist Party Executive)

In the following article J. R. Campbell, acting Editor of "The Worker's Weekly," who is at present being tried on a charge of seducing members of the Armed Forces of the Crown from their allegiance to the King, deals with M. Philips Price's series of articles on "The Labour Party and Power" which concluded in last month's issue of THE LABOUR MONTHLY.—Editor, THE LABOUR MONTHLY.

IN his first article in February, 1924, Mr. Price, in indicating that the situation of the Labour Government was new as far as Britain was concerned, pointed out that there were some striking parallels and warnings to be derived from recent European history.

The awful examples of the Russian Mensheviks and the German Social Democrats were held up before us.

The Russian Menshevik Party had "found itself faced by class opposition, and instead of using its stragetic position as a leader of a class which was aspiring to power it whittled away its programme in the excuse that Russia must be saved from anarchy."

"The German Social Democratic leaders used the absence of a sufficient parliamentary majority for their party as an excuse for abandoning the most important part of their social programme, which alone would have made a beginning in stopping the anarchy in the methods of production and distribution."

The passage of the Mensheviks to White-Guardism and of the German Social Democrats to the messenger boys of General Seeckt was then explained in detail.

Those awful examples are held up before the Labour Party, which is told that by sole control of the administrative machine "We can do much to relieve the unemployed and initiate public works. Yet where shall we get the money from?"

Comrade Price indicated two alternatives: (1) Inflation; (2) An appeal to the country on the Capital Levy. The third alternative

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was, of course, the *status quo*—to refuse to " do much " for the unemployed and to put off the initiation of public works. That is a continuation of the Baldwin policy, plus some slight administrative and comparatively cheap adjustments of the machinery of the Insurance Act, such as the abolition of the gap, &c.

Price's first article was written in February and subsequent developments have shown that the policy which he advocated has not even been considered. The Labour Party has continued the Baldwin policy, and the two descriptions of the activities of the Russian Mensheviks and the German Social Democrats given above, which Price proved to end in disaster, can equally well be applied to the policy of the Labour Party.

In his second article Price suggested that the " Budget surplus be earmarked for laying the foundations of a real Socialist policy and the extension of State at the expense of private enterprise at home."

We know on the contrary that the Budget gave as much relief to the propertied classes as it did to the workers ; that it raised no fresh taxation from the rich and will leave no substantial surplus at all ; that the Government is unable to carry out any policy which involves immediate heavy expenditure, and the path of the Labour Government is littered with broken pledges.

In his third article Price indicates that in his opinion the Labour Party was merely doing the work of the City and armament firms in building the five cruisers. He indicated that it had not even the excuse of parliamentary necessity for doing so. as the Liberals would probably have supported it in a refusal to build the five cruisers. The building of those cruisers was regarded by Price as an Imperialist threat to France.

In the same article we are told that the experts who were at that moment considering the question of reparations were " really the nominees of the Wall Street and the City Banks."

We are further told that " the Labour Government will be digging its own grave if it permits the British and American banks to float a loan to Germany on the conditions which they intend to exact."

Since that has been written the Labour Party has not only accepted the report " *of the nominees of Wall Street and the City*

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Banks," but has treated it reverently, actually making the hundred per cent. acceptance of that report a test of the orthodoxy of a Labour Candidate in a bye-election. It is cheerfully digging its own grave, and the grave of the European working class, by eagerly backing the forty million Anglo-American Loan to Germany.

These developments are significant enough, and ought to have convinced Mr. Price that the Labour Government was deliberately treading the road to disaster against which he had warned it.

Yet in his fourth article he expresses a doubt as to whether the Labour Party is going the way of the German Social Democrats. The heart of the Labour Party is, he says, still sound. It has done some things well, it has done other things badly. We must not croak and give up hope.

Now surely we are here discussing the strength of the tendencies which we see operating. Are there increasing signs that the Labour Party is fighting capitalism more energetically, gradually discarding the Imperialist policy of its predecessors, or are there signs that it is carrying out the Imperialist policy of its predecessors ever more energetically, whilst apologising for its inability to do anything for the working class ? Surely the latter is correct.

Price mentions a few of the achievements of the Labour Government which he offsets against its criminal Imperialistic record. They are the Budget, the Housing Scheme, improvement in pensions, better maintenance for the Unemployed. Also it might have stopped evictions if the Liberals and Tories had let it.

Pensions and increased unemployment allowances are comparatively small changes, costing very little. Indeed the increased unemployment allowance suggested is more in the nature of a relief to the Board of Guardians and the Parish Councils than it is to the unemployed. The reduction of indirect taxation by the Budget. Well, what of it? A Labour Government, surrounded by a working class in the bitterest poverty, finds itself in possession of a Budget surplus. It gives three-fifths of that surplus to the workers and about two-fifths to the bourgeosie, and because it does this instead of handing the whole surplus over to the bourgeoisie it is regarded as doing wonderfully well. Its heart is still sound.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We believe that the main test of the Labour Government on the Budget was whether it would tax the bourgeoisie for purposes of social reform and whether it would continue to support capitalist armament expenditure. Before the Budget all the bourgeois Press was anticipating an increase in taxation, however slight. When no increase was imposed they cheered Mr. Snowden's Budget to the echo. As for the great Housing Scheme—even granting its applicability—an acid test of that scheme is which class is going to pay the subsidy for the houses which are being built. The Labour Government has left that question open at present.

Compare that miserable record of achievement in the interests of the working class with the eager pursuit of capitalist policy in the colonies and Europe, and who can say that the Labour Government is not rushing rapidly along the same lines as the German Social Democracy.

After all, declares Mr. Price, the Labour Party had a better record after six months than the German Social Democracy had after four years. There Mr. Price is comparing the Labour Party after six months with the German Social Democratic Party whose policy has been tested and found wanting over a period of four years.

All that we can say with regard to the statement is that in the first six months of office the German Social Democrats were able to show as big results on paper, to create as many illusions as to the possibilities of peaceful progress, as the Labour Party has in its first six months. The hopes raised were illusory as subsequent events showed, and they will prove just as illusory in Great Britain.

In face of the most obvious facts Mr. Price declares that the Labour Party has not hopelessly compromised itself with reaction. It all depends on the blessed word " hopelessly." It has at any rate compromised itself seriously with reaction. How can it attack any capitalist government for participating in an armament race after the five cruisers ramp ? How can it logically attack any capitalist government for engaging in acts of brutal repression in the colonies after Mr. Leach's defence of the Irak bombing ? How can it accuse any capitalist government of heartlessness in regard to the unemployed when on the approach of the fifth winter of unemployment it is allowing things to drift ? How can Labour propagandists

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

indulge in condemnation of useless, heartless displays of luxury in the midst of grinding poverty when a large section of the Labour leaders have shown themselves only too ready to indulge in such displays themselves ? The Labour Party has seriously compromised itself and unless the present leadership is removed the chances of carrying on a vigorous fight against Capitalism are absolutely nil. Does Mr. Price forget the first years of the Coalition Parliament when the Labour Party, heavily compromised by its own war record, was unable to offer serious opposition to the policy of Lloyd George ?

Now before discussing what steps can be taken to combat the Imperialist policy of the Labour Government we might pause to ask ourselves what this policy really is. Are we faced merely with the mistakes of a government sincerely anxious for the triumph of the working class, sincerely desirous of winning greater influence for it, or are we witnessing the consistent carrying out of a reformist political policy ? Is it merely mistakes of detail which are being made, or is it the whole conception of how to improve the conditions of the workers which is behind the day-to-day actions of the Government absolutely false? We are convinced that the Government's policy results from the consistent application of reformist politics to a given situation, and what the left should be concerned in criticising is not merely this or that point of detail but the whole conception of reformism underlying the practice of the Labour Government. We have to destroy the idea that by co-operating with the capitalists, by continuing the policy of its predecessors, or that by passing a series of small reforms we will be able gradually to transform Capitalism into Socialism. Is this Mr. Price's conception or is it not ?

If Mr. Price does not believe in the gradual democratic transformation from Capitalism to Socialism what does he mean by suggesting that the Communists should win the confidence of the I.L.P. left wing by "showing what practical measure which leads us one step towards our end can be undertaken under the present balance of class power both in Parliament and in the workshops as existing at the present time" ?

Now if it is suggested that a whole series of practical measures which will lead us one step towards our end can be taken up

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and passed by the Labour Government under the present balance of class power then we are in the presence of the most credulous reformism. It is not the business of any serious Socialist to suggest that there is a whole series of first steps to Socialism which could be passed by the Labour Government under the present class balance of power, if it would only sit up and take notice. It is our business to point out to the workers that under the existing balance of class power one cannot do anything for the working class without the permission of the capitalist class, that if the workers want anything done the present balance of class power has got to be altered. It is the business of a real left wing to agitate in the Labour Party for that party to bring forward a series of immediate measures, not in the expectation that the kind capitalists will stand aside and allow us to carry them into operation, but for the purpose of rallying the masses for a struggle to change the existing class balance of power.

Can Capitalism be conquered step by step by parliamentary means? That is the question Mr. Price comes near to raising.

He tells us truly that the period of open storming of the Capitalist fortresses has passed by meantime and then suggests that we must carry on a "guerrilla warfare on the industrial front and the capture by stages of the parliamentary and administrative machinery of Capitalism."

If the suggestion in the latter part of the quotation is that the Capitalist State can be conquered stage by stage and then used in the interests of the working class then we have here a complete reversion to MacDonaldism in theory which will sooner or later reveal itself as a reversion to MacDonaldism in practice.

It may of course be necessary to insist that the Labour Party fight for the various items in its programme. It may be necessary to agitate that it fights for certain immediate aims. It all depends on how we regard those aims? Whether we regard them as reforms which can easily be carried out within the frame work of Capitalism, a gradual accumulation of which will transform society from Capitalism into Socialism, or whether we regard them as rallying demands around which the masses will engage in struggle which will consolidate their forces for the revolution: in short,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

do we regard immediate demands as a method of avoiding revolution or as a method of rallying the masses for revolution? It is one thing to ask the Labour Government to bring forward a programme of immediate demands and call the masses to its support in struggling for those demands and so intensify the class struggle; it is quite another thing to suggest that all that is required is for the Labour Party to bring forward immediate demands and the bourgeoisie like the old soldiers "will simply fade away."

Before we talk then about the co-operation of the I.L.P. and Labour Party Left with the Communists for a common struggle within the Labour Party this much has got to be made clear. The Communists are desirous of seeing the Labour Party fighting for certain immediate aims, of rallying the masses in the struggle for those aims, in order that the class struggle may be intensified and the workers prepared for taking power into their own hands.

If any of the I.L.P. left are prepared to struggle alongside the Communists against the Imperialist tendencies of the Labour Government, if they are prepared to struggle in order to make that Government fight for the workers in Parliament, then the Communists are prepared to help them as they would help any other bodies of workers engaged in the same task. But if that same I.L.P. Left spreads the illusion that a more vigorous policy on the part of the Labour Party in Parliament is all that matters, that the State machinery of Capitalism can be gradually conquered and used on behalf of the workers in order to transform society gradually from Capitalism to Socialism, then the Communist Party will very definitely oppose the idea. A more vigorous policy in Parliament may rally the workers' forces and to that extent is valuable, but the final struggle to set up a real workers' Government is not a Parliamentary struggle, not a struggle between a Labour Parliamentary fraction and Capitalist Parliamentary fractions, but the organised struggle of the whole working class against Capitalism.

If that struggle is to be successful then there must be unity of aim and common direction of the decisive majority of the working class at the decisive moment. The Communist Party while willing to co-operate with any other groups within the Labour movement is not going to allow itself to merge its identity in a

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

formless left block, but is going to preach the need for a revolutionary party to lead the workers in their struggle and is going to endeavour to build up that party from the advanced elements of the Labour Movement.

In fighting reformism in the Labour Movement we will have to criticise individuals and explain to the workers the rôle which they are playing in the social movement. Much as Mr. Price dislikes it, we may have to dub certain individuals " agents of the bourgeoisie" or a simple equivalent if we can find it.

We cannot carry on serious political propaganda at all, political propaganda which really explains the existing situation, without stressing the fact that there is in the Labour Movement an upper stratum amongst the leadership which has been corrupted by Imperialism and which is in all its acts consciously or unconsciously an agency of the bourgeoisie. If we find that that particular phrase conveys nothing to a British worker we will have to find an equivalent, but we must not in order to avoid wounding the feelings of hyper-sensitive persons omit the mention of one of the most important facts in the Labour Movement at the present time.

Now as to our attitude to the I.L.P. Left and the left wing of the Labour Party it is somewhat difficult to lay down general rules because the left is what Robert Burns would have called " a michty, machty, queer hotch potch," and is not a homogeneous body. One thing may be said to all the non-Communist left, however, and that is that if they are opposed to the present policy of the Labour Party in whole or in part and want to change it then they must oppose it in a more open fashion. At the moment practically the whole of the non-Communist left in the Labour Party are drifting complacently down the stream of MacDonaldism, salving their consciences by occasionally muttering against MacDonaldism under their breath. The attitude of this Left in the Dawes Report has been cowardly in the extreme and the first thing they must learn if anyone is going to take them seriously at all is to display a little political courage.

Secondly, we desire to point out to the I.L.P. Left that so long as it remains associated with a middle-class pacifist wing which is virtually the right wing of the Labour Party all its efforts are being nullified by people within its own party.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

However, as there is such a Left the Communists are prepared, while combating reformist illusions, to unite with it on any points on which there is common agreement.

We would suggest on this head that if agreement could be reached on the following points:—

(1) Repudiation of the Dawes Report.

(2) A serious campaign in the Labour Movement to force the Labour Government on this the eve of the fifth winter of unemployment to put the six point charter into operation on behalf of the unemployed.

(3) The organisation of the trade union forces alongside the Labour Government in the struggle for a national living wage.

(4) The Nationalisation of the Mines and Railways and the development of a National Electrical Service not solely in the interests of cheap motive power for the employers, but in the interests of the community as a whole.

(5) The repudiation of an Imperialist Labour policy and the granting of complete self-determination to all the subject races within the British Empire.

If the I.L.P. and Labour Party left is prepared to work, not only in a clandestine fashion within the Labour Movement, but openly upon a public platform to rally the broad masses behind those or similar demands and force them upon the Labour Government then there may be a basis for an arrangement which will bring the left forces within the Labour Party together in a definite pact. If that is what Mr. Price is out for there is a basis for discussion.

If, however, he is out to suggest that the Communists should kindly water down their policy, moderate their criticism and whisper to the active workers within the Labour Movement that after all the Labour Party might be a little more extreme but we must not say so too openly in public, then the Communist Party is standing none of that nonsense: such a Left position either implies gross stupidity in not recognising that it is not only the minority of active workers in the Labour Movement who have to be won over, but the broad masses, or it is the politically dishonest position of men who are unable to square their intellect with their ambitions.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE SUDAN "SCANDAL"

By H. P. RATHBONE

THE story of what has been called the "Sudan Scandal" began with the raising of the question by Thomas Johnston as to whether a loan to the Sudan Government should properly be guaranteed by the British Government under the Trade Facilities Act 1921, in view of the following facts:—

(1) That H. H. Asquith was the man who introduced the deputation which went to the committee set up under the Trades Facilities Act to advise the Government whether to guarantee these loans or not. For was not Asquith's son a director of the Sudan Plantations Syndicate, which was already in receipt of a loan from the Sudan Government and which would be the company which would get part of the profits from the cotton grown in the area, for which the Sudan Government was wanting the loan to develop? Further, Asquith represented Paisley, a constituency which it was maintained would directly benefit from the scheme owing to the existence there of Coats' sewing cotton factory.

(2) That the loan to develop cotton plantations in that area would not provide employment for British workers.

(3) That S. Pearson & Sons, Ltd., Lord Cowdray being its president, had obtained the contract for the scheme while Lord Cowdray was financially interested in the scheme.

The facts of No. 1 are correct except so far as Coats' wage earners are concerned. No. 3 has apparently never been proved, but that does not mean that it is untrue. No. 2 was apparently wrong, as certain of the plant for the dam which would provide irrigation facilities for the cotton plantation, was ordered in England.

But the whole affair involves further questions than were raised by Thomas Johnston.

As far back as 1900 efforts have been made to develop cotton cultivation in the Sudan. In 1904 an "agreement" was reached "under the auspices of Lord Kitchener, who was then in command in the Sudan"—as Lord Stanley put it in the debate in the Commons

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on April 5, 1924 (col. 1458)—between the Sudan Government, the Sudan Plantations Syndicate, Ltd., and the native cultivators. This agreement laid it down that the proceeds from the sale of cotton grown under the agreement should be divided as to 40 per cent. to the native cultivator, 25 per cent. to the Sudan Plantations Syndicate, Ltd., and 35 per cent. to the Sudan Government.

Though it is admitted that the native cultivators had unimpeachable title to the land they cultivated, in 1921 the Sudan Government issued the Gesira Land Ordinance whereby they obtained a lease of the land, owned by the natives, for a period of forty years, and at the same time took power to re-let it out to these same natives on annual tenancy, " the landowners being given full opportunity to take up as cultivating tenants so much of their own land as in practice they are able to cultivate on an artificial irrigation system involving regular and careful cultivation, with which, of course, they are not familiar." (Report on Egypt and Sudan for 1920, Cmd. 1487, 1921, p. 136.) Thus the natives were practically expropriated from their land and were only given back certain portions of the land to cultivate on condition that they cultivated it on the system laid down by the Sudan Government and the Sudan Plantations Syndicate, Ltd., and were liable to be expropriated altogether if that cultivation did not meet with the approval of these " authorities." Lord Stanley in the same speech, quoted above, said that in return for the 40 per cent. proceeds from the cotton sales the native " gave his labour." Thus the native owner became practically a wage servant of the " authorities."

Now these " authorities " though nominally the Sudan Government, were in reality the Sudan Plantations Syndicate, Ltd. For the while the Sudan Government in return for its ratio of 35 per cent. from the proceeds of cotton sales, undertook to get the dam and the large irrigation works constructed by which alone the cotton could be grown, the concession for the growing and marketing of the cotton was handed over to the Syndicate. For the 25 per cent. share, the Syndicate undertook the carry out minor operations concerning the irrigation works, and to educate the native cultivators in the best methods of growing cotton. " They also had to act," again in the words of Lord Stanley," as land banks in financing the cotton crop on behalf of the native cultivator." The native cultivator, though he was interested in getting the best price for his cotton, would thus be

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

completely in the financial grip of the Syndicate. That the people behind the Syndicate were by no means unaware of the benefits that such an agreement would give them is shown by a minute of 1913 of the British Cotton-growers (now Growing) Association, quoted in the *Manchester Guardian*, January 26, 1923.

> Another difficulty, and a serious one, is the unearned increment in the value of land. The land without irrigation is worth, say 2s. per acre, with irrigation possibly as much as £10 to £20 an acre (p.a. E.M.G.). It does not seem reasonable that the whole of this large increase which is due to large expenditure on the part of the Government and consequently of the whole community should go into the pockets of individual owners.

The Government incurs the expenditure; the price of the land goes up; how is the Syndicate to get this increased increment? That was the "difficulty" and a "serious" one. The solution was found as we show above by "requiring" the Syndicate to be the bankers of the native cultivators, by "requiring" them to "finance" the cotton crop on behalf of the native cultivators.

How profitable the financing of a cotton crop can be, will be seen from the following quotation taken from a Supplement to the *Commerce Reports*, the weekly publication of the U.S.A. Department of Commerce, on Egypt for 1922. The writer of this report is urging the establishment of an American bank in order to get a share in the financing of Egyptian cotton. Such a bank, he maintains, "would yield large returns on an absolutely safe basis." He then explains how this is done.

> It is customary for banks as well as large exporters to receive cotton from planters for storage in warehouses controlled by banks and exporters, and to advance loans against the cotton so held, usually up to 60 per cent. of its spot value, with the right to dispose of the cotton if the margin narrows. Not only is interest charged on the loan, but storage charges are also made on the cotton while it is being held in warehouse. Cotton so held is almost invariably sold through the bank or exporter under orders from the owner, and for this service the bank or exporter receives a commission.
>
> It will, therefore, be seen that with adequate security a bank operating a cotton department would earn profits as interest on loans, storage and commission on sales, and throughout would be adequately protected by holding in its possession cotton which can promptly be liquidated on the spot market.

The scheme itself involves the irrigation of the Gesira plain, which lies between the Blue and White Niles south of Khartoum.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It is estimated that production by 1925 will reach 70,000 bales of Egyptian long staple cotton (c.f. the total consumption of cotton in England equals 3,500,000 bales) and, according to the *Morning Post* (November 6, 1922), 250,000 bales in the next ten or fifteen years and 1,000,000 bales later.

The scheme was first launched in 1913, but no public issue of money was made till October, 1919, when an issue of £3,500,000 5½ per cent. bonds at £95½ per cent. was made under a guarantee by the Imperial Government under the Sudan Loan Act of 1919. The financiers and others who floated the loan thus appropriated £157,500, being the difference between the issue price and the par value of the Stock on which interest would have to be paid, leaving a net amount available for the Sudan Government of £3,342,500. A further issue was made in February, 1921, of £2,880,000 at £92 per cent. The financiers again appropriated £230,400, thus leaving a net amount of £2,649,600 for the Sudan Government. Out of these two sums £1,000,000 was reserved to paying the interest on the loans until the scheme became sufficiently productive to the Government. Thus while the Sudan Government was responsible to paying interest at 5½ per cent. on a total of £6,380,000, only £4,992,100 was available for the construction of the dam which it was intended would earn this interest.

This is by no means the end of the story. For the contract for the building of the dam was originally placed with a man called Alexandrino, to whom Thomas Johnston referred in the Commons Debate on March 4, 1923 (col. 1285). For he asserted there that this man got the contract on the basis of being paid " 10 per cent. on everything he spent, including his wages bill, and it was after the Sudan Government had become aware that this money was being wasted that they cancelled the contract and paid him a heavy sum in compensation for cancelling it." This charge of wastage was not denied by William Graham, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, in his reply.

The Sudan Government then proceeded to place the contract with S. Pearson & Sons, Lord Cowdray's firm. A further £3,500,000 was found to be necessary. An issue of £3,250,000 4½ per cent. guaranteed stock at £93 per cent. was, therefore, made in January, 1923. Here again the financiers obtained a sum of £227,500 on the deal, leaving a net amount of £3,022,500 for the works. In 1924, the Advisory

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Committee under the Trades Facilities Act approved of a further £3,500,000 to be guaranteed by the Imperial Government; no doubt on this issue also, if it is made, the financiers will levy their toll. The excuse given for this guaranteee of a further £3,500,000 is that if this money is not made available—and it was maintained that it would not be got without a guarantee—the British Government would become liable for interest and principal under their guarantee on the whole of the remaining £9,630,000 as the whole scheme would collapse without further cash.

It is not surprising that the Sudan Government with all this unproductive debt on which it must pay interest, has increased the burdens of taxation and these burdens fall on the native cultivator. Thus the revenue from some taxes in 1913 and 1921, the last year for which complete figures are available, is as follows:—

	1913		1921
	£		£
Date tax	16,380	. .	22,781
Animal tax	81,599	. .	190,161
Customs department	186,837	. .	487,280
Land Tax			
(*a*) Taxed land	45,078	. .	39,832
(*b*) Ushur (tithes)[1] . .	122,430	. .	315,277
	£452,324	. .	£1,055,331

The result of the transaction is as follows:—

The Sudan Government constructs a dam and other irrigation works, being robbed in the process of immense sums of money,

[1] This is a tax equivalent to 10 per cent. of the value of the crops assessed; thus if three cotton crops a year are harvested the tax has to be paid on each of the crops. According to the report of the Sudan Government on the position of the native cultivators this tax, however, has been definitely remitted in the case of the cultivators under the Syndicate scheme. This is merely a device to get more labour to work on the scheme, and not as the report tries to make out, a magnanimous gift from a generous and openhanded government. For by this means these Sudanese who at present cultivate rain-grown cotton (*i.e.*, cotton grown in areas which have not been artificially irrigated) and thus remain liable to the tax, would be tempted to work under the scheme; in addition the prospect of freedom from this tax would attract the many pilgrims returning from Mecca, when, *i.e.*, a previous report on the Sudan cast jealous eyes as a further source of labour for the scheme. It will then happen that when a sufficient labour force has been accumulated, the Sudan Government will cancel this exemption or increase other taxes such as the sugar monopoly tax or even introduce new taxes always, of course, under the hypocritical excuse that the budget must be balanced, and that all classes must bear their share of this most regrettable situation.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

some of which goes to financiers and some of which goes to contractors who fail to construct the works.

The native cultivator, previously in undisturbed possession of his land, is compelled under threat of expropriation to cultivate cotton on a system under which he practically becomes a wage labourer. What freedom remains to him is indirectly valueless by the fact that on the the one hand he is tied to his employers' banks, who kindly finance him and on the other burdened by increased taxation—increased in order to pay interest on the money which was obtained to enslave him.

The Syndicate on the other hand is in effect the employer of the native, is the marketer of the cotton, is the banker to the native, and finally receives a loan from the Sudan Government for the purpose which it is required to undertake under the agreement.

In addition the Syndicate is developing another region, the Kassala region, for cotton growing; in order that this cotton may become marketable it induces the Sudan Government to construct a railway from this area to join the main Government line to Port Sudan, the chief port on the Red Sea; it further induces the Government to hand over the management and profits, of course, of the line for a period of thirty-one years to a company—the Kassala Cotton Co., Ltd,—in which a controlling interest is held by the subsidiary it sets up, in order to grow cotton in this same region, Kassala. Finally, in order that the railway may have all the benefits of Government knowledge and yet be able to pay revenue to the Syndicate, one of the directors is the consulting engineer to the Sudan Government Railways.

This is the scheme which the Labour Government has supported. The only points on which they have agreed to ask for further information are:—

(1) What is the system of taxation, particularly with regard to its incidence in the area in question.

(2) The exact system under which the tenant cultivators will develop their plots with particular reference to the security of tenure enjoyed by the tenant cultivators (note well the phrase "tenant cultivators"; according to the Land Commission of 1908, these "cultivators" were confirmed in their *ownership* of these lands; now they are called "*tenant* cultivators").

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(3) Whether the cotton produced can be offered first for sale in Great Britain, and

(4) Whether a maximum price could be fixed for it to prevent corners.

Yet Mr. Graham tried to minimise the profits of the Syndicate by averaging the dividends of the company since its formation, and yet asserted in the same speech that he could not deal with the question "as to the position of the native and to his taxation and other problems of that kind" (Hansard, March 4, 1924, col. 1294), affirming that these "problems" would be satisfactorily answered by the queries (given above) which had been sent to the Sudan Government (as if any satisfactory answers to such questions could be sent by a Government of such a nature).[1]

As to the effects of the production of long staple cotton under this scheme on Lancashire. The present crop of cotton grown in Egypt amounts to 450,000 bales, only part of which is long staple cotton. The supply in 1925 from this scheme in the Sudan is reckoned to be 70,000 bales, increasing to 250,000 bales in fourteen or more years. The whole basis of the scheme is to keep the price of the cotton high: the heavy taxation will mean high prices: the Syndicate itself has a number of cotton interests which, so long as they remain connected with the Syndicate, will not lose by the high price.

The situation in Egypt will contribute towards maintaining the price of cotton, so long as the Soudanese crop remains small. For there the land has been completely alienated from the native and is in the hands of the land companies. They let this out to the native at rents of £10 to £15 (pre-war rents) which, according to E. M. Ginders, of the Power Engineering Co., Trafford Park, writing in the *Manchester Guardian* (January 16, 1923) makes it the most expensive agricultural land in the world. As he goes on to say: "It would appear in order to pay this tremendous toll the price of Egyptian cotton must be kept up by judicious curtailment of acreage under crop." This curtailment has been carried out under Egyptian

[1] Since this was written, the reply of the Sudan Government has been published and as was to be expected it leaves the position just as it was. It merely tries to show how generous the Sudan Government has been especially with regard to taxation to which we refer in a previous footnote; but, of course, it makes no reference to the future position or to the land banking operations "required" of the Syndicate.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Government auspices by restricting the acreage of cotton to one-third of its normal amount in the years 1921, 1922, 1923.

The result is that though there is a cry for increased production of long staple cotton and millions of money are sunk in an effort to do this, at the same time the production of this cotton is being curtailed in Egypt in order that the expropriated natives may be able to pay the tremendous toll of rent to the Egyptian land and mortgage companies such as the Land Company of Egypt, the Mortgage Company of Egypt, and the Agricultural Bank of Egypt.

In the Sudan the position though on the surface different is essentially the same. The native, though nominally in full possession of his land, is in reality a tenant cultivator, who can be expropriated if he does not cultivate his cotton to the liking of the Syndicate. Though there are no land speculators and land banks under the scheme, the syndicate is " required " to be the financier of the native. Each " partner " in the scheme, the Government, the Syndicate, and the cultivator is interested in maintaining the price. The Government to balance its budget, the Syndicate to pay increased profits, and the cultivator to pay taxation to the Government and toll to his financiers, the Syndicate.

This means that there is no prospect of lower-priced cotton. Capitalists are now in the position that, however much they think that increased production would increase their profits, increased production is impossible because the profits to be made for the various interests prevent the output from being increased: the gangrene of the bondholders' toll, whether in the form of interest or Government loans or dividends on the capital lent to the Syndicate, is retarding production. The cultivation of cotton in the Sudan will be restricted in the future to pay this toll of the bondholder, just as it is now being restricted in Egypt. Such is the position.

The Labour Government supports this position. The Labour Government then agrees to exploit the Sudanese cultivators in order that the Syndicate may retain its profits. The Labour Government therefore refuses to abandon the Sudan. The Labour Government is an Imperialist Government. Is any other conclusion possible ?

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

RELIGION, ART AND MARXISM

By A. BOGDANOV

THERE are two great problems for the proletariat to solve in the field of the arts. The first is that of independent creation: the perception of self and of the world in harmonious living images, the expression of its mental forces in artistic forms. The second is that of acquiring its inheritance: it must master the artistic treasures created in the past and assimilate all that is great and beautiful in them, without submitting to the spirit of bourgeois and feudal society reflected in them.

This second problem is not less difficult than the first. We shall inquire into the general methods of its solution.

A religious person who seriously and attentively studies a strange creed exposes himself to the danger of being converted to it, or acquiring from it beliefs which are heresies from the viewpoint of his own religion. Thus it has happened that learned Christians, having devoted themselves to a study of Buddhism, have become Buddhists themselves, or at least have been converted to the moral teaching of Buddhism; the reverse has also happened. The same religious systems may be studied by a freethinker, who sees in all religion only a revelation of the poetic creation of the peoples (this is not the whole truth about religion, but part of it). Is he exposed to the same danger as the religious scholar ? Of course not ! He may exult in the beauty and depth of the teachings which have attracted hundreds of millions of people, but he perceives them not from the religious but from another and higher viewpoint. The immense richness of thought and feeling which is revealed in Buddhism will certainly appeal to his heart and mind more than to the heart and mind of a learned Christian who cannot get rid of the hidden resistance of his own faith, struggling against the " temptation " of the strange religion; but the fact is that there is no temptation to become a Buddhist for the freethinker—his

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mind is so constructed as to assimilate the religious material in a manner of its own.

Both the Christian and the freethinker take Buddhism "critically." But the main difference is in the type of their critical attitude, in its bases—"criteria." The believer is not standing above the subject of his study, but approximately on a level with it. He criticises from the standpoint of his own dogma and his own feelings, and he tries to find contradictions in the strange myths and in their moral revaluations; when he discovers such contradictions he is unable to appreciate the poetic or vital truth which is frequently hidden behind them. And even when he penetrates to this truth, he pays for it by a contradiction with himself—he "submits to temptation." He is unable to regard Buddhism as a cultural heritage from a strange world; and if he receives this alien favourably, it conquers him and compels him to become an apostate from his former creed.

The case of the violent atheist is about the same. He is a representative of the progressive, but not sufficiently developed, bourgeois consciousness, who sees in every religion only superstition and deception. He is an "inverted believer." He has risen above religion sufficiently to renounce it, but not enough to understand it. For him religion is also not a heritage; and sometimes it is even a temptation; he comes to feel that it is not only deceit and superstition, but does not understand what it really is.

In quite a different position is our freethinker, representative of the highest stage which may be attained by bourgeois consciousness. His view of religion as a product of the poetical creation of the people allows him, within the limits of this viewpoint, to appreciate his subject quite freely and in an unprejudiced manner. For him it will not present a difficult inner contradiction to learn that the laws of Manu, among the ancient Aryan Hindus, are by the depth of their ideal much more sublime than either ancient or modern Christianity, or that their relation to death, as expressed in their burial rites, is incomparably higher than the Christian in nobleness, sublimity, and beauty. He who is free from all religious consciousness, who will struggle against it whenever it tends to obscure the thought or pervert the will of man, is still

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in a position to make all religions a valuable cultural heritage for himself and for others.

The attitude of the proletariat to all the culture of the past—of the bourgeois world and of the feudal world—passes through the same stages. In the beginning the worker takes it to be merely culture, culture in general; he does not imagine that culture in its essence can be anything other than that; he is all on a level with it. There may be blunderings in its science and philosophy, there may be false motives in its art, injustices in its morals and laws; but all this is not connected with the essence of it; these are its faults, deviations, imperfections, which further progress would improve.

And though he later on begins to notice in this culture something "bourgeois" and "aristocratic," still he understands these traits only as *a defence of the interests* of the ruling classes, a "defence" which falsifies the culture; but he still has no doubt as to the essence of this culture, its methods and viewpoint. He is wholly on its level, and while trying to assimilate "whatever is good in it" he is not protected against it even as much as the Buddhist or Brahmin is protected against the temptations of Christianity, or *vice versa*. He absorbs the old way of thinking and feeling, and the whole attitude towards the world based upon those ways. His own proletarian class viewpoint is preserved only at the moment or the place where he hears sufficiently clearly the imperious voice of class interest speaking. When there is no such clearness and conviction and the problem of life is difficult and complicated, especially when the problem is still new, he does not solve it independently; either a ready-made solution is taken from the surrounding social environment, or even his proletarian class interest is considered and understood from an alien point of view.

Both tendencies have been clearly manifest in the attitude which the working-class intellectuals of the European countries assumed towards the war. Some gave themselves up to the wave of patriotism, almost without stopping even to consider; others were "able to understand" that the "higher interests" of the working class demanded unity with the bourgeoisie to protect or save the fatherland and its wealth, because "their destruction

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would throw the working class and the whole of civilisation back." This great and cruel experience revealed quite clearly the fact that as long as the proletariat had not worked out its own attitude towards the world, its own way of thinking, its own all-embracing viewpoint, a proletarian cannot master the culture of the past as his inheritance; that culture will master him and use him as human material for its own aims.

If the proletarian, convinced of this, arrives at a mere anarchical negation of the old culture, *i.e.*, if he renounces his heritage, then he puts himself in the position of the naive atheist with his crude attitude towards our religious heritage. But he is in an even worse case, for it is, after all, possible for the bourgeois atheist to do without an understanding of religion—he has other cultural values to depend upon; only the breadth of his thought and the swing of his creation suffer. But the worker is not in a position to put up anything at all to counterpoise the rich and developed culture of the hostile camp; he is unable to create anew anything on a similar scale. It remains a splendid tool or weapon in the hands of his enemies—against him.

The conclusion is obvious. The working class must find and develop to the greatest possible extent a viewpoint that is higher than the culture of the past, just as the viewpoint of the freethinker is the higher in the world of religion. Then it will become possible to master this culture without submitting to it, to turn it into a tool for the construction of a new life, a weapon for the struggle against that same old society from which this culture comes.

Karl Marx made a beginning in the mastery of the mental forces of the old world. The revolution that he accomplished in the field of social science and social philosophy consists in the fact that he revised their basic methods and their results from a new, higher standpoint—which was the proletarian standpoint. Nine-tenths or even more, not only of the materials for his gigantic construction, but also of the methods of their application, were taken by Marx from bourgeois sources; he used the bourgeois classical economists, the reports of the English factory inspectors, the petty bourgeois criticisms of capitalism made by Sismondi and Proudhon, and as a matter of fact all the intellectual Socialism of

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Utopians, the dialectics of the German idealists, the materialism of the French Encyclopædists and of Feyerbach, the social class theories of the French historians and the admirable descriptions of class psychology by Balzac, etc., etc. All this received a new form and was arranged in new combinations, it was turned into a tool for the building of a proletarian organisation, a weapon for the struggle against the rule of capital.

How was this miracle accomplished ?

Marx established that society is primarily an organisation for production; this is the basis for all the laws of its life and the development of its forms. This is the standpoint of a socially productive class, it is the *standpoint of a toiling collectivity*. With this for his starting point, Marx accomplished a criticism of the science of the past, he purified its material, remelted it in the fire of his ideal, and created out of it proletarian knowledge—scientific Socialism.

Thus we see the way in which cultural achievements of the past have been turned into an actual inheritance for the working class: *it is by critical rearrangement from the standpoint of collective labour*. This is how Marx himself understood his task ; it was not by chance that Marx characterised his main work, *Capital*, as a " Critique of Political Economy."

This is not only true in regard to social science. In all other fields the method of acquiring and assimilating the heritage of the past is by means of our criticism, by proletarian class criticism.

We shall now look more fully into the basis of our criticism. We must find the essence of the standpoint of collective labour.

Three stages may be distinguished in the social process, or, to be more accurate, there are three sides to it: the technical, economic and ideological. On the technical side society struggles against Nature and subjugates it, *i.e.*, *it organises the external world* in the interests of its life and development. On the economic side —the relations of co-operation and distribution among men— *society organises itself* for this struggle against Nature. On the ideological side society *organises its experience*, creating out of this experience the tools for the organisation of its life and development.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Consequently, every task in technique, in economics and in the sphere of mental culture is an *organisational* task, a work of social organisation.

There are and can be no exceptions to this rule. An army may have for its aim destruction, annihilation, disorganisation. But this is not its final aim; the army is itself only a means—a means by which to reorganise the world in the interests of the community to which the army belongs. An artist, an individualist, may imagine that he is creating only for and out of himself; but if he really worked only for himself, his creation would not appeal to anyone beside himself. It would have no relation to mental culture, just as passing and incoherent (but beautiful) dreams are not related to it. And if he tried to create only out of himself, without making any use of the material, the methods of work, creation and expression that he receives from his social environment—then he would not create anything at all.

The standpoint of the labour collectivity is all-organisational. It could not possibly be otherwise with the working class, which organises external matter into products in its labour, organises itself into a creative and fighting community in its co-operation and in its class struggle, and organises its experience into class consciousness by its whole mode of life and by its creative work.

It could not be otherwise, with a class which has to accomplish the historical mission of organising harmoniously the whole life of humanity.

We shall now return to our first illustration. Can and should the whole world of religious creation become a heritage for the working class, against whom every religion has up till now been used as a weapon for enslavement? What use could it find in such an inheritance, what could it do with it?

Our criticism gives a clear and comprehensive reply to this question.

Religion is the solution of an ideological problem for a certain type of community, namely for the authoritarian community. It belongs to the collectivity built upon authoritative collaboration, upon the leading rôle of some men and the executive rôle of others, on authority and subordination. Such was the patriarchical

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

clan community, such was feudal society, such were the serf and slave organisations, and such are the bureaucratic police States of to-day; the same state of things prevails in the modern army, and upon a smaller scale in the bourgeois family; and finally capital builds its enterprises on the principle of authority and subordination.

What is the organisational use of a system of accepted ideas? To organise harmoniously the experience of society in such a manner as to suit material organisation, so that cultural achievements may, in their turn, serve society as a means of organisation, to preserve, form, strengthen and further develop the given type of collective organisation. And it is quite easy to perceive how all this is arranged in an authoritarian order of life.

This order is simply transplanted into the field of experience and thought. Every action, whether human or elemental, every phenomenon is represented as a combination of two links—of the organising active will and the passive execution. The whole world is represented as an image of the authoritarian society. At the head of it a supreme authority, a "deity," is put, and, with the complication of the authoritative combinations, a series of subordinated authorities—lower gods, "demigods," "saints," etc., are added, who manage different fields or sides of life. And all these representations are accompanied by authoritarian feelings and moods: admiration, humility, respectful awe. Such are the relationships in religion. It is merely an authoritarian ideology.

It is quite plain what a perfect organisational tool this is for an authoritarian order of life. Religion simply introduces man into this order, assigns to him a definite place in its system, and disciplines him for the execution of the rôle assigned to him in this system. In feeling, thought and experience the personality is fused with the social environment. It forms an indestructible unit.

The form of religious creation is, for the most part, poetic. This was correctly noted by our freethinker, who did not discern, however, the main thing—the social contents of religion. During those stages of social development when religion is in process of formation, poetry is not yet differentiated from practical and theoretical knowledge, it still includes them in its scope. Religion

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

then includes all and every knowledge, it organises the whole experience of men; knowledge is then understood as a revelation emanating from God, either directly or through some intermediary agents.

What kind of inheritance, then, is religious culture for the proletariat? A very important and valuable one. After it has passed through the worker's criticism it becomes for him a tool not for the support of, but for the understanding of all the authoritarian elements in life. The authoritarian world has decayed, but it is not dead; its vestiges surround us on every side, sometimes openly, but for the most part under the most various and sometimes unexpected disguises. In order to conquer such an enemy, it is necessary to know it, know it thoroughly and seriously.

The question is not only one of renouncing religion; though even in this respect the worker who has acquired the new critical attitude will prove considerably better armed than the furious but naive atheist, who renounces all creeds because of logical calculations, or opposes them with the childish assertion that religion was invented by the priests for the exploitation of the people. More important still is the fact that the possession of this inheritance enables us to form a correct estimate of the significance of the authoritative elements in present-day society, their mutual connection, and their relation to social development. If religion is a tool for the preservation of authoritarian organisation, then it is clear that in the relations of the classes religion for the workers serves only as a means to ensure their subordination, a means to preserve in them the discipline that the ruling classes desire them to possess, in order to keep exploitation secure—in spite of what various religious Socialists say. It is clear that the formula adopted by most Labour parties to the effect that "religion is a private affair" is but a temporary political compromise with which we cannot rest content. It becomes evident why there is such a perpetual alliance between sabre and cassock, between the military and the church; both have a strictly authoritarian organisation. It also becomes clear why the patriarchical petty-bourgeois and peasant family is so attached to religion, to the "law of God"; and at the same time we can see the great danger in the way of social progress that this fecund

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

seed of authoritarianism may represent if it is preserved. A new light is shed upon the rôle of party leaders, on authorities and the significance of collective control over them.

Further, the whole artistic treasury of the experience of the people, preserved and crystallised as it is in the various holy traditions and letters, pictures of a strange original life with a harmony of its own, is continually broadening the vision of man, giving him a deep insight into the universal motion of humanity, urging him towards new independent creative work which will not be tied down by the usual environment and habits of thought.

Does it, then, not pay the working class to take its religious heritage ?

The above article consists of notes taken at a series of lectures delivered by A. Bogdanov in Moscow during 1920 *and published in Russian as a series of three articles.*

The first two of these articles, which deal with proletarian poetry and proletarian criticism, were published in The Labour Monthly *last year, and copies can still be ordered. The conclusion of the third article illustrates the Communist attitude to the artistic inheritance of the working class by reference to "Hamlet" and other classics. We hope to publish this in a future number.*

A Bogdanov is, of course, the noted economist and the author of "The Short Course of Economic Science."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

STABILISATION

By GÉZA SCHÜTZ

(*We publish below an article by a member of the Hungarian Social Democratic Party, at present in exile for the part he took in the Hungarian Commune of* 1919. *The article deals principally with the effects of the League of Nations' "reconstruction loan" to Austria, whereby the League has proved itself a tool in the hands of Allied capital for the colonisation of Austria. With the issue of the Hungarian Loan bearing £8 16s. per cent., the process is about to be repeated. Some time ago* THE LABOUR MONTHLY *requested Count Michael Karolyi, who was Radical Prime Minister in the Social Democratic and Liberal Coalition Government which was formed in Hungary at the time of the Armistice and the first revolution, and which gave way to the proletarian dictatorship in the following year, to contribute an article on the subject of the League of Nations, the British Labour Government and Hungary. Count Karolyi, who was refused an interview by Mr. Snowden at the time the Chancellor of the Exchequer was receiving the financial representatives of Horthy's White Terror, agreed subject to an assurance being received from official quarters that his position as a political refugee in this country would not be prejudiced. An inquiry on our part to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was answered by Mr. Ponsonby to the effect that he could give "no such assurance" and that "Count Karolyi must himself take the risk involved, if any."*—Editor, THE LABOUR MONTHLY.)

AFTER Austria it is to Hungary that those nations who have the cash to spare for transactions both lucrative and humanitarian are giving credit under the auspices of the League of Nations, in the name of economic reconstruction of the country in question. From the moral point of view this act enters into the category of State philanthropy, which is the parent of private philanthropy. Its ethical foundation is to give in order to receive back multifold: to receive dividends sooner or later—but the sooner the better; as soon as possible, and

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

accompanied by laurels honouring the humane gesture of having saved a people from black misery.

Let us not seek in high finance for human morality. Let us look rather for the motive of gain.

In technical jargon this business is called financial stabilisation. We already have the almost final result of the stabilisation of Austria; we should therefore draw useful and fertile conclusions as to the prelude of Hungary's stabilisation. For if the same mistakes are committed, the consequences will again be the same. And if these consequences are to be avoided, there must be haste to eliminate the causes which fatally provoke such consequences.

Austria had received, as is known, a credit of 650 million gold crowns. This sum was guaranteed by Great Britain, France, Czecho-Slovakia, Italy, Belgium, Sweden, Denmark, Holland and by Switzerland.

The interest on the loan is at 8 per cent., that is to say, at a rate sensibly in excess of that usual for State issues. To guarantee that interest the lending Powers have taken as security the customs revenues and the receipts of the tobacco monopoly. These advantages furnished the golden key to the bankers' safes; the smiling prospect of Profit had a charm wherewith to open purses. In London and New York the list was subscribed several times over within five minutes. It will be evident from what follows that this great devotion was not influenced by the desire or intention to relieve suffering among the workmen and their children, who for ten years have indulged themselves in the luxury of starvation that they might have the pleasure of giving the bankers a good opportunity for a humane act.

The League of Nations had sent its Commissioner to Vienna to supervise the execution of the plans for administrative and financial reforms. He performed the task which he was set. He was not asked to ameliorate the general condition of the workers, or to raise their standard of life, that the children of the working class might be fed with a view to reducing the appalling rate of infant mortality and the spread of tuberculosis and phthisis. He was not told to work towards such ends. But he was instructed to balance the budget, to harmonise, in a way shocking neither to the ear nor

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to eyesight, expenditure and income. So the *leit-motif* of this melody was not the succouring of the people but the saving of the budget. That these two things are not necessarily the same is proved by numerous examples in both past and contemporary history.

The High Commissioner balanced the budget in the manner of a Richelieu, for good or for evil, but rather for evil than for good. On the one hand he cut down expenditure, on the other he increased revenue. So far, so good—there can be no objection in principle to that. But look more closely at what constituted the increased receipts and what the diminished expenditure.

The number of ministries was last year (1923) eleven. For the sake of economy four of them were suppressed. The number of ministries was reduced, but not the sums allocated to their support, because with the regrouping of offices and of *personnel* these expenses remained practically the same. This fact was established by the High Commissioner, Mr. Zimmermann, himself.

The dismissal of civil servants and workmen employed by the State was begun. The serving of notices on State employees bore a direct relation to the process of denationalising the State factories. The object aimed at was to widen the field of enterprise for private capital. According to the scheme, the number of employees affected was fixed at 100,000. During the first year—that is to say, up to November 17, 1923—there were 51,043 dismissals; then, up to February of the present year, 63,307.

Most of these, who so lost their employment, were recruited from the working class and not from among the Civil Service. The salaried officials retained their sinecures—and I am not here thinking of the small employees and petty officials, but of the army of departmental heads, assistant heads and their colleagues who exist in more than superfluous numbers—meanwhile that quantities of workmen had to experience the benefits of stabilisation. The statistics prove this, half of the State employees being in the service of the Austrian railways, one-fifth in the nationalised industries and so on—only one-third of the total consisting of strictly administrative officials.

The consequence was that the "*Abbau*" (as the process was

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

called in technical phraseology) considerably increased the number of those unemployed in industry.

There were 30,967 drawing unemployment pay in August, 1922, that is to say, just before the negotiations commenced at Geneva. In November, 1922, this figure had risen to 58,008; in November, 1923, to 75,809, and then on March 15, 1924, to 126,734. The above shows that the number of unemployed increased more than 400 *per cent.* during a period of eighteen months under the regime of stabilisation.

At the same time the number of those drawing unemployment pay has been reduced to such a point that half of those unemployed have no pecuniary resources whatever.

In order to increase the receipts of the Austrian budget the Government has raised direct taxation to such a high level that the revenue from these sources amounts to more than twice the sum foreseen under the stabilisation project. Taxes paid were seven to ten times greater in March, 1924, than in September, 1922.

In addition to this direct taxation the indirect taxes, the "breakfast-table taxes," which in the end only hit the working classes, also followed the prevailing fashion—towards the heights. It is further obvious that new taxes were not missing from this Tenth Symphony of high finance; among these the most unbearable for the proletariat was the synthetic "*Warenümsatzsteüer.*" So as to balance the budget the more effectively, the quack economists had the energy and courage to raise even further the customs tariffs. That the consequences of these high tariffs had again to be borne by the working class is evident. The effect of this policy was at first a rapid, and then a gradual rise in the cost of living. The index number shows month by month the ever-increasing cost of living, the impossible price of food and necessities.

According to the budget plans of the Austrian Ministry of Finance for the year 1924, the revenue from taxation and customs dues is as follows:—

Direct taxes	1,516,700	millions	of	paper crowns
Food taxes	556,500	„	„	„
Customs	1,238,400	„	„	„

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

These figures show that more than 50 per cent. of the revenue is to be paid by the poor, since in the last resort it is always the proletariat which has to pay for customs duties and food taxes. Would it not have been juster to levy a 50 per cent. tax only on big fortunes and so to raise the money required to cover the deficit?

What went on in Austria is beginning in Hungary. The procedure is being duplicated step by step. We cannot yet speak of the results of the financial stabilisation of Hungary because the spectacle has only just opened. But there are certain precise indications which enable us to foresee already a general crisis breaking out. Hitherto Hungary has been plunged in the slump following inflation; the new period is the crisis of stabilisation. Day by day the amount of unemployment is increasing; so is the cost of living; misery marches in ideal harmony with its predecessors and tuberculosis follows after its creators. If the living are unemployed, Death is not; a rising death rate is often profitable, and at the same time it has the virtue of solving the social problem: a radical reduction of the number of "*les miserables*," of the slum population.

Malthus would blush to see how he has been surpassed.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

KARL MARX ON ROBERT APPLEGARTH

(*Readers of* THE LABOUR MONTHLY *may be interested in the following note from our contributor, Max Beer, containing extracts from letters of Karl Marx referring to Robert Applegarth, the veteran English Labour leader, who died at the age of ninety last month. Applegarth, who became Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners (now the Woodworkers) in* 1862, *when it was newly formed and one of the largest unions in the country, was the last survivor of the Central Council of the International Working Men's Association (the "* 1*st International") formed in July,* 1864, *and of the group of five who formed in* 1867 *the Conference of Amalgamated Trades, which may be regarded as the predecessor of the present Trades Union Congress.*)

IN the correspondence of Marx with his friend Frederick Engels there are several passages concerning the late Robert Applegarth. In one of the letters, dated December 4, 1869, there is a characteristic one of general interest.

Marx, in reporting at some length the discussion of a resolution moved by him on Irish affairs at a meeting of the Central Council of the International Working Men's Association, in which Odger, Mottershead, Milner, &c., took part, writes at the end of his letter:—

"Enclosed a note sent to me by Mr. Applegarth, which you will only appreciate from the following. At the conclusion of the last council meeting, in which Applegarth behaved very decently, he took me aside and related to me as follows :—

> "An eminent member of the House of Commons, on instruction from an eminent member of the House of Lords (Lord Leachfield), asked him whether it was true that he (Applegarth) had voted at the Basle International Congress for the abolition of all private property. He (Applegarth) was determined to tell those fellows his opinion on the matter, but wanted me to give him a short draft of the reasons of the Basle resolution.

"My state of health, aggravated by the atrocious fog of Tuesday evening, prevented my doing any work at all, so I wrote to him on the following morning that I could at present send him

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nothing, but that I was ready to support him in any controversy which might ensue on this matter. Whereupon he, with English tenacity, wrote me the enclosed note. I was thus willy nilly obliged to give him the reasons for the Basle resolution in a letter of eight closely written pages, dealing with landed property and the necessity of its abolition. You must know that Mr. Applegarth is regarded on the part of both Houses of Parliament as the official representative of the English trade unions."

Here is another passage. In a letter of April 28, 1870, Marx writes:—

"Last Tuesday the Central Council unanimously adopted my motion (seconded by Mr. Mottershead) 'to sever our connection with the *Beehive*.' Mr. Applegarth sat opposite to me, while I spoke in support of my motion, with a diminished head, since he and Odger are on the Editorial Committee of the *Beehive*. I denounced this paper as being sold to the bourgeoisie (Sam Morley, &c.)."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The World of Labour

		Page
Germany : Social-Democratic Congress	..	505
France : Elections and Socialist Liberal Collaboration	..	506

GERMANY

Social-Democratic Congress

THE Congress of the United[1] German Social-Democratic Party opened at Berlin on June 11. It is significant that, in spite of the crisis through which Germany has been passing for the last eighteen months, this was the first Congress held since the Unity Congress of the Majority and Independent Social-Democratic Parties at Nuremburg in September, 1922.

The membership returns for the end of last year were given as 1,260,000. including 130,000 women. This represents a decline of some 10 per cent. on the 1922 figures, which were approximately 1,400,000. It was reported that membership was increasing. The Party has 169 daily papers, no one of which has been suppressed by the Government.

From the Press reports of the Congress it appears that the chief speeches and reports consisted for the most part of diatribes against the Communists and attacks on Soviet Russia. Typical of the latter was the remark of the Communist renegade, Dr. Paul Levi, to the effect that Europe could not find peace, not because of capitalism, but because of the " imperialism " of Soviet Russia.

Dr. Rudolf Hilferding delivered a report, " warmed not by any revolutionary glow, but by a kind of affable optimism " (*Manchester Guardian*), on the result of the Reichstag elections, in the course of which he declared that Social-Democracy has a vital interest in the maintenance of a calm and peaceful development of economic conditions. He further stated that Mr. MacDonald has carried out the new methods of Socialism in his foreign policy, that the Experts' Report must be accepted, that the Social-Democratic Party would defend the eight-hour day and that Socialism and the Republic are inseparable.

Hermann Müller reported on the policy of the Reichstag fraction of the Party. He confessed that he could not understand the criticisms directed against the Reichstag fraction because it had not intervened to have the state of siege raised,

> " For " he said, " the state of siege does not contradict democracy : it was directed against the Communists."

He further declared that in future the Social-Democratic Party would have to work in even closer co-operation with the bourgeois Parties. He threw

[1] One of the Congress decisions was that the United should be dropped from the name of Party, as it was a reminder of " past internal differences."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

an interesting sidelight on the state of mind of the Party when he observed that one of their difficulties had been the desertion of misguided members to Fascism.[2]

A striking feature of the Congress was the collapse of the Left Wing in the Party. They were at such pains to dissociate themselves from the Communists that they naturally played right into the hands of the Right Wing Bureaucratic Leaders. Most of their resolutions of criticism were either not pressed or were very rapidly disposed of. The resolution approving the policy of coalition with the bourgeois parties and declaring that these questions should be left to the Party Executive and the Reichstag fraction was passed, against Left Wing opposition, by 262 votes to 105.

The Right Wing were also successful in forcing through a resolution (only one vote being cast against it) declaring that no member of the Social-Democratic Party could at the same time be a member of the Workers' International Relief. Previously the Social-Democratic Left Wing have vigorously combated the assertions of the Right Wing (based on police-forged documents) that the W.I.R. is a "Communist propaganda organisation." They now accepted this position and dutifully resigned from the W.I.R.

The comments of the bourgeois Press, both German and foreign, on the Congress have been instructive. The Berlin papers generally agreed that the Social-Democratic Party was no longer a workers' party. The *Frankfurter Zeitung* appropriately headed an article on the Congress "Sentimental Reflections on a Congress" and declared that :—

> The Social-Democratic Party is lost in opportunism and only lives now from hand to mouth.

The Berlin correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* wrote:—

> And what of the ideas that once were the very life of German Socialism ? The Congress performed the silent burial of them all . . . The great edifice built by Karl Marx, Engels, Lassalle, and Bebel, crumbled into ruins that are nothing more than a relic of the dead past.

And, then, more damning than all:—

> It is the masses who have borne the brunt of a long series of struggles, harder and more bitter than almost any in the history of German labour. [Referring to the great strikes this year—Hamburg dockers, Ruhr miners, Central German chemical workers—in defence of the eight-hour day.] But for these obscure, inarticulate masses the Socialist Congress had hardly a word of genuine recognition.

FRANCE

Elections and Socialist-Liberal Collaboration

LAST March these notes reported the decision of the French-Socialist Party to join in the "Left-Wing" coalition (*Bloc des Gauches*) with the Liberals (the "Radical-Socialists," &c.) for the purpose of the General Election.[3]

This remained the position. The Communist Party went ahead alone as the class Party of the workers and peasants, the *Bloc Ouvrier et Paysan.*

[2] See also THE LABOUR MONTHLY, June, 1924, Vol. 6, No. 6, p. 379.

[3] THE LABOUR MONTHLY, Vol. 6, No. 3, pp. 185-187.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The general results of the election are sufficiently well known: and in view of the extremely complicated nature of the French electoral system it is almost impossible to discover any rational basis on which to calculate voting figures that have any comparative value. The following table is, however, of interest:—

	1919	1924
Socialists	1,715,338 [4] ...	—
Radicals, &c.	1,366,943 ...	—
Bloc des Gauches	(3,082,099)[5] ...	3,898,357
Briand group	774,944 ...	662,288
Bloc National	3,739,099 ...	3,503,275
Communists	— ...	875,812

The present state of parties is :—

Socialists, Socialist-Communists, &c. ...	108	299
Radicals,&c	191	
Briand group		49
Bloc National		210
Communists		26

The majority (61) of the Socialist deputies were elected on the Radical and Socialist coalition ticket, receiving 2,107,545 votes. Some forty Socialist deputies were elected on an independent ticket, and received votes variously given as 687,668 and 749,647. From these figures the official Socialist organ *Le Populaire*, calculated that the Socialist vote must be at least 1,700,000,. *i.e.*, not less than the 1919 figure. Hence it deduced that the Socialist Party was the one real working-class Party This piece of electoral mathematics is given for what it is worth.

Most significant about the Communist vote was its strength in Paris. In the great working-class suburbs which surround Paris the Communist list came top of the poll.

Having participated with the bourgeois Liberals in an electoral victory, the Socialist Party found itself faced with the problem whether it should or should not take the further step of participation in a coalition government. To decide this question a special national Congress was summoned which met on June 18 although the Marseilles Congress in January-February of this year had already decided against it.

The National Congress was preceded by congresses of the local Federations of the Party The Federations of the Rhone, Var, Herault, Vaucluse, and Tarn voted for participation. The Haute Garonne voted for participation "under certain conditions." The Bouches-du-Rhone and Somme Federations voted against participation.

Perhaps the most remarkable argument in favour of participation was the appeal of M. Emile Vandervelde, the leader of the Belgian Labour Party to the French Socialist Party. It was printed in the Toulouse paper, *La Dépêche*. He said:—

> "We are a class party, of course, but who has demonstrated better than Jaurès by his every speech and action that the class-struggle has never been

[4] In 1919, of course, the majority of the Socialist Party had not yet become the Communist Party.

[5] There was, of course, no *Bloc des Gauches* in 1919: the entirely arbitrary total in brackets is inserted for purposes of comparison with the 1924 figures.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> exclusive of coalitions or temporary *ententes* for a determined end ? And in a country like France, where the stratification of classes is so altogether unlike that of England, Germany or Belgium, where the working-class proletariat (*sic*), nay the proletariat as a whole, is a permanent minority, is it not, may be, a crime against the spirit of Marxism not to regard the coalition of victorious Radicals and Socialists as the true *bloc* of workers and peasants—I mean, of course, the Radical-Socialists, the Radicals who already call themselves Socialists, and who may be really Socialists to-morrow, or whose electors in the country may be Socialists to-morrow ! "

When the National Congress met, however, it soon reached a deadlock between the supporters of coalition on the one hand and those on the other, who simply wished to give parliamentary support to a Herriot Cabinet. The one or two delegates who wished to maintain the independence of the Party were completely isolated: and a letter from the Communist Party proposing once more the *Bloc Ouvrier et Paysan* was turned down without ceremony.

One of the supporters of coalition, M. Marius Moutet, declared that:—

> He and his friends were prepared to take the responsibility of entering the Government. If any other decision was taken, he could not associate himself with it. It is absolutely necessary to accept the responsibilities that face us . . . . The refusal of coalition means the end of the Party. The hour has come for the Party to send its chosen representatives to share in governmental power.

M. Varenne (now one of the Vice-Presidents of the Chamber of Deputies), foreshadowed what was to be the eventual way out of the deadlock when he said:—

> We do not ask the Party to say here and now : We must enter a coalition government ; but do not force us to say that we shall not do so in the future.

The final resolution, which was unanimously accepted, " put on one side" the question of participation in the government, " under the circumstances of the moment." However, it was expressly stated that the question could be re-opened if " exceptional circumstances should arise." Further, in case of urgency, the Executive was empowered to call a special national Council " to which the full powers of the Congress are delegated."

The comment of the *Manchester Guardian's* Paris correspondent was very just. Writing before the Congress, he said:—

> It is fear of the Communists and the jibes of *l'Humanité* rather than pious respect for an old dogma of the Socialist creed that prevents French Socialists from taking their share in M. Herriot's Cabinet . . . The attitude of the Communist organ shows the reality of the risk that the Socialists would run in forming an alliance with the bourgeois party, a risk which might mean eventually new scissions in the Party or the loss of vast masses of the workers, yet which would seem to be almost as great under the alternative course of a pledge of support and voting of the Budget."

This alternative course was the one adopted by the Party in the resolution prefacing its reply to the letter sent by M. Herriot to the Congress, setting forth his typically Liberal "democratic-pacifist" social reform programme (a programme very little different from that on which the Socialist Party had fought the election). It should be noted that the voting of the Budget was a step without precedent in the history of French Socialism: and the resolution had expressly to absolve the Socialist deputies from the Party rule which forbade voting for the Budget.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The record of the Herriot government to date is common knowledge. It culminated in the refusal to evacuate the Ruhr (a step explicitly approved in a speech made by M. Renaudel, the well-known Right Wing Socialist), and the consequent demand for the voting of credits for the Ruhr occupation.

The Socialist deputies, despite the injunction of the Congress that a united vote should be strictly maintained, split over the issue, which Herriot declared to be a vote of confidence. Forty-three voted for the credits: sixty-one abstained, not one voted against. A singularly disingenuous attempt was made by M. Leon Blum in a leading article in *Le Populaire* (now only a fortnightly) to explain away the whole affair as simply a "parliamentary incident," due to a series of "purely fortuitous misunderstandings"—as the Party executive declared in a special vote on the subject.

The position of the Socialist Party has been very clearly put by M. Paul Faure, the General Secretary of the Party, in an editorial article in *Le Populaire*:—

> If any one section of the bourgeoisie rather than another offers us at any given moment more guarantees, more security in the political and social system and in the field of foreign relations, then we may be led to adopt a particular policy towards it . . . Hence our policy of support (for the Herriot cabinet . . . because it is better—or less bad—than Poincaré and the Bloc National).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Free Youth. Vol. 1, No. 3. Peace Number, May, 1924. (Young People's Socialist League, New York. 10c.)

Der Weg des Intellektuellen. By George Iskarniamer. (Verlag für Literatur und Politik, Vienna.)

Krieg und Proletariat. By Wilhelm Bammann. (Verlag für Literatur und Politik, Vienna.)

Die Geschichte eimer Fabrik. By Franz Jung. (Verlag für Literatur und Politik, Vienna.)

Literatur und Revolution. By L. Trotzky. (Verlag für Literatur und Politik, Vienna.)

Der Neue Mensch im Neuen Russland. Rackblick aber die erste Etappe proletarischer Erzbhlungskunst. By Franz Jung. (Verlag für Lineratur und Politik, Vienna.)

Pax. The Quarterly Review of the Benedictines of Caldey. No. 68, Autumn, 1923. (Caldey Abbey, Tenby, S. Wales. 1s. 6d.)

General Belinda. By Ethel Holdsworth. (Herbert Jenkins. 7s. 6d.)

The Wages of Labour. By William Graham, M.P., M.A. (Hons.), LL.B., Financial Secretary to the Treasury. (Cassell & Company. Revised edition. 3s. 6d.)

Hyndman as Prophet of Socialism, 1842-1921. The Second Memorial Lecture of the Hyndman Trust, delivered at South Place Institute, London, on Thursday, March 6, 1914, by Frederick J. Gould. Will Thorne, M.P., in the chair. (Hyndman Literary Committee. 6d.)

Das Neue Russland. May-June, 1924. (Gesellschaft der Fruende des neuen Russland in Deutschland, Berlin.)

A Guide to the Study of Marx. An Introductory Course for Classes and Study Circles. Syllabus Series No. 14. By Max Beer. (Labour Research Department. 6d.)

Report on the Activities of the International Federation of Trade Unions during the Years 1922 and 1924. Submitted to the Ordinary Congress, Vienna, June, 1924.

Jack London : Ein Dichter der Arbeiterklasse. By Franz Jung. (Verlag für Literatur und Politik, Vienna.)

Von der Internationale des Worts zur Internationale der Tat. By Clara Zetkin. (Verlag Carl Hoym Nachf. Louis Cahnbley, Hamburg.)

Der Kapitalistische Terror. By F. Kon. (Verlag Carl Hoym Nachf. Louis Cahnbley, Hamburg.)

Funf Jahre Kommunistische Internationale. By G. Zinoviev. (Verlag Carl Hoym Nachf. Louis Cahnbley, Hamburg.)

Die Internationale Kommunistische Bewegung. By V. I. Leviv. (Verlag Carl Hoym Nachf. Louis Cahnbley, Hamburg.)

Lenins Literarisches Erbe. By L. B. Kamenev. (Verlag Carl Hoym Nachf. Louis Cahnbley, Hamburg.)

Aufsteig Oder Niedergang des Kapitalismus. By E. Varga. (Carl Hoym Nachf. Louis Cahnbley, Hamburg.)

In Der Sackgasse. By W. Weressajew. Translated into German by Maria Einstein. (Verlag für Literatur und Politik, Vienna.)

Resolutions and Theses. Adopted by the Fourth Bureau Session of the Young Communist International, held in Moscow, July, 1923. (Berlin.)

The Syndicated Supply of Electricity on the North-East Coast and the Abuse of Statutory Powers ; a plea for Public Investigation. Being a statement made at the Annual General Meeting of the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Electric Supply Company, Ltd., held on Tuesday, March 27, 1923, with amplifying notes by Andrew Gemmell, a shareholder and a former Secretary of Electric Power Companies. (6d.)

The Economic Illusion. By Arthur Bertram. (Leonard Parsons. 7s. 6d.)

The American Labour Year Book, 1923-24. Volume V. Rand School of Social Science. (Rand Book Store, New York. $3.00.)

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Britain Overseas. The Story of the Foundation and Development of the British Empire from 1497 *to* 1921. By Cumberland Clark. (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Company. 12s. 6d.)

The Fife Miners' Union Split: The Struggle Control of Union: Rank and File versus Officialism. (Mineworkers' Reform Union.)

Public Finance. A Syllabus for Classes and Students. Syllabus Series No. 15. By Hugh Dalton. (Labour Research Department. 6d.)

Germany and the League of Nations (Fabian Tract No. 212). By Hermann Kantorowicz. Being a Lecture delivered to the Fabian Society, London, April 4, 1924. (Fabian Bookshop. 2d.)

Canada To-day, 1924. Edited by Robert J. Arnott, M.A. (The Canada Newspaper Company. 2s. 6d.)

The Torchbearer. A Quarterly Review of Education and the Other Arts. Volume I, No. 1, July, 1924. Edited by C. R. King. (Wells, Gardner, Darton and Co. 1s.)

The People's Hymn. By Oliver R. Baldwin. Adapted from Otto Barblan's Harmonisation of the Armenian National Anthem. (Twentieth Century Press. 3d.)

Engineers and Poverty—The Ruin of the Engineering Unions—Aims of the Revolutionary Metal Workers. By V. Vaksov (Secretary of the I.P.C. of Metal Workers). With an Introduction by J. T. Murphy. (National Metal Workers' Minority Movement. 1d.)

The Government of France. By Joseph Barthelemy. Authorised translation by J. Bayard Morris, Scholar of Queen's College, Oxford. (Allen & Unwin. 6s.)

The Rebuilding of Rural England. By Montague Fordham. (Hutchinson & Company. 10s. 6d.)

Dock Labour and Decasualisation. By E. C. P. Lascelles and S. S. Bullock. (P. S. King & Son. 10s. 6d.)

Political Letters. By Manabendra Nath Roy. (The Vanguard Bookshop, Zurich.)

A Practical Policy for Unemployment. (I.L.P. Information Committee. 2d.)

Financial Report for the Twelve Months ended December, 1923. (Amalgamated Engineering Union.)

Social Insurance—What it is and what it might be. By Alban Gordon, B.Sc., F.C.S. (The Fabian Society, and Allen & Unwin. 6s.)

International Social Progress. By G. Johnston, M.A., D.Ph. (Allen & Unwin. 10s. 6d.)

Annual Report for 1923. (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union. 1d.)

New Hope and the Road to Plenty: Practical Proposals for Immediate Use. By Robert Fleck. (Reformers' Bookstall, Glasgow. 3d.)

Birth Control and Republican Prosperity. An Open Letter to President Coolidge in Defence of Religion and Individualism—A 1924 Campaign Document presenting a new and feasible plan for relieving the farmers and promoting public welfare. By Charles Smith. With which is printed *Pantopia, a remarkably strange story from the South Seas by a Collie,* with a Preface by Elibot Cadeson van Morfellon. (The Author, New York. 10 cents.)

Who Owns the United States? Abraham Lincoln's Prediction as to the Future Made in 1864; *Senator Pettigrew's Prediction as to the Future Made in* 1900; *Capital.* By R. F. Pettigrew. (The Author, Sioux Falls, S.Dak.)

The Triumph of Christian Civilisation. By R. F. Pettigrew. (The Author.)

The Different Age (or, Restitution). By Martin J. H. Slama. (Stockwell. 2s. 6d.)

The Housing Problem. A Statement of the Present Position. (Prepared by the Housing Sub-Committee of the Consultative Committee of Women's Organisations. Revised issue. 1s.)

Kelly's Directory of Chelsea, Pimlico, and Belgravia. With Map. (Kelly's Directories, Ltd. 2s. 6d.)

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Farm-Labour Party. Speech delivered by Ex-Senator R. F. Pettigrew, at a Convention of Farmers and Labourers held at Sioux Falls, South Dakota, November 26, 1922. (Charles H. Kerr & Company, Chicago. 10 cents.)

A Bibliography of Annie Besant. By Theodore Besterman. (The Theosophical Society of England. 2s.)

Europa 1914 *und* 1924 (*Bild und Gegenbild*). By Universitatisprofessor Dr. Carl Brockhausen (Literarischen Anstalt A.G., Vienna; Dr. Georg Jugendhat, correspondent of the *Neue Freie Presse*, London.)

The Week-End Book. Edited by Francis Meynell and Vera Mendel. Song Editor, John Goss. (The Nonesuch Press. 4s. 6d.)

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ARCOS Ltd.

49 Moorgate, London, E.C. 2

SOLE PURCHASING AND SELLING AGENCY IN GREAT BRITAIN FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE U.S.S.R.

ARCOS IMPORTS FROM RUSSIA

TIMBER — TAR, PITCH, TURPENTINE, ASBESTOS, GRAPHITE, MICA, PLATINUM, MANGANESE ORE, HIGH GRADE IRON ORE, ZINC, LEAD AND COPPER ORES, GLAUBER SALTS, ETC.

FLAX — KEROSENE, LUBRICATING OILS, FUEL OILS.
CEMENT, HEMP, TOW, HIDES, SKINS, BRISTLES, CASINGS, HORSEHAIR, WOOL, FEATHERS, DOWN, ETC.

PETROL — CHEMICALS, CRUDE DRUGS: CALAMUS ROOT, CARAWAY SEED, ERGOT OF RYE, FUSEL OILS, ISINGLASS, LYCOPODIUM, LIME TREE FLOWERS, LIQUORICE ROOT, PINE OIL, SOAP ROOT, CARBONATE OF POTASH.

FURS — PEASANT HAND-MADE GOODS, CARPETS, TOYS, SPARKLING WINES, WINES, CAVIAR, ETC.

ARCOS EXPORTS TO RUSSIA

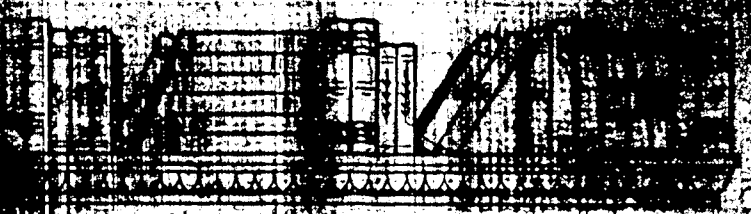
AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY, ENGINES, TOOLS, MOTORS, SCIENTIFIC APPARATUS, DRUGS, CLOTHES, BOOTS, ETC., ETC.

ARCOS LIMITED

Turnover since Autumn, 1920: £36,400,000.

Inland Telegrams: ARCOSARCOS AVE. LONDON. Cables: ARCOSARCOS.
Telephone: London Wall 6626 (ten lines). Codes: A B C 5th and 6th Edit., BENTLEY'S, MARCONI, ZEBRA
Private Branch Exchange.
BRANCHES: NEW YORK, 136 Liberty Street. CONSTANTINOPLE, Rue Voivoda Galata.
BRANCHES IN RUSSIA: MOSCOW, Tverskaya 1 (Ugol Ploschadi Revolutzii); LENINGRAD, Ul Gertzena 24; KHARKOV, 24 Rimarskaya; TIFLIS, 38 Rustaveli Prospekt.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



TO EDITORS

PUTTING YOUR PAPER TO BED is a task which will be all the lighter if you are certain of the co-operation of your printer. Comfortable editorial accommodation, telephone facilities, careful reading, reliable craftsmanship, despatch to schedule, are our contribution to the journals we print. We are able to consider the production of one or two more weekly and monthly papers. Our plant and experience are

ALWAYS AT YOUR SERVICE

In your first communication to us please mention "The Labour Monthly."

LONDON

Caledonian Press Ltd.

TRADE UNION IN ALL DEPARTMENTS

W. FRANCIS MOSS, *Managing Director*

74 Swinton Street, Gray's Inn Road
London, W.C.1

Telegrams: Caledonian, Kincross, London
Telephone: Museum 1341
Telephone: 2777

Printed by the Proletarian Printing Union, 162 Buckingham Palace Road, S.W.1
and published by Caledonian Press Ltd., 74 Swinton Street, Gray's Inn Road, W.C.1

REPRODUCED 2005 BY MINT OF
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED